Early Shī'ī Thought

The Teachings of Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir

ARZINA R. LALANI

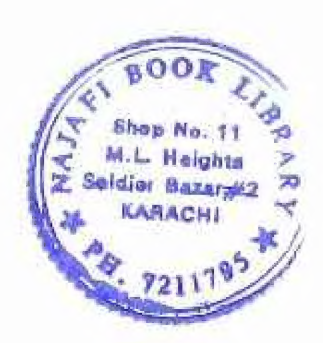
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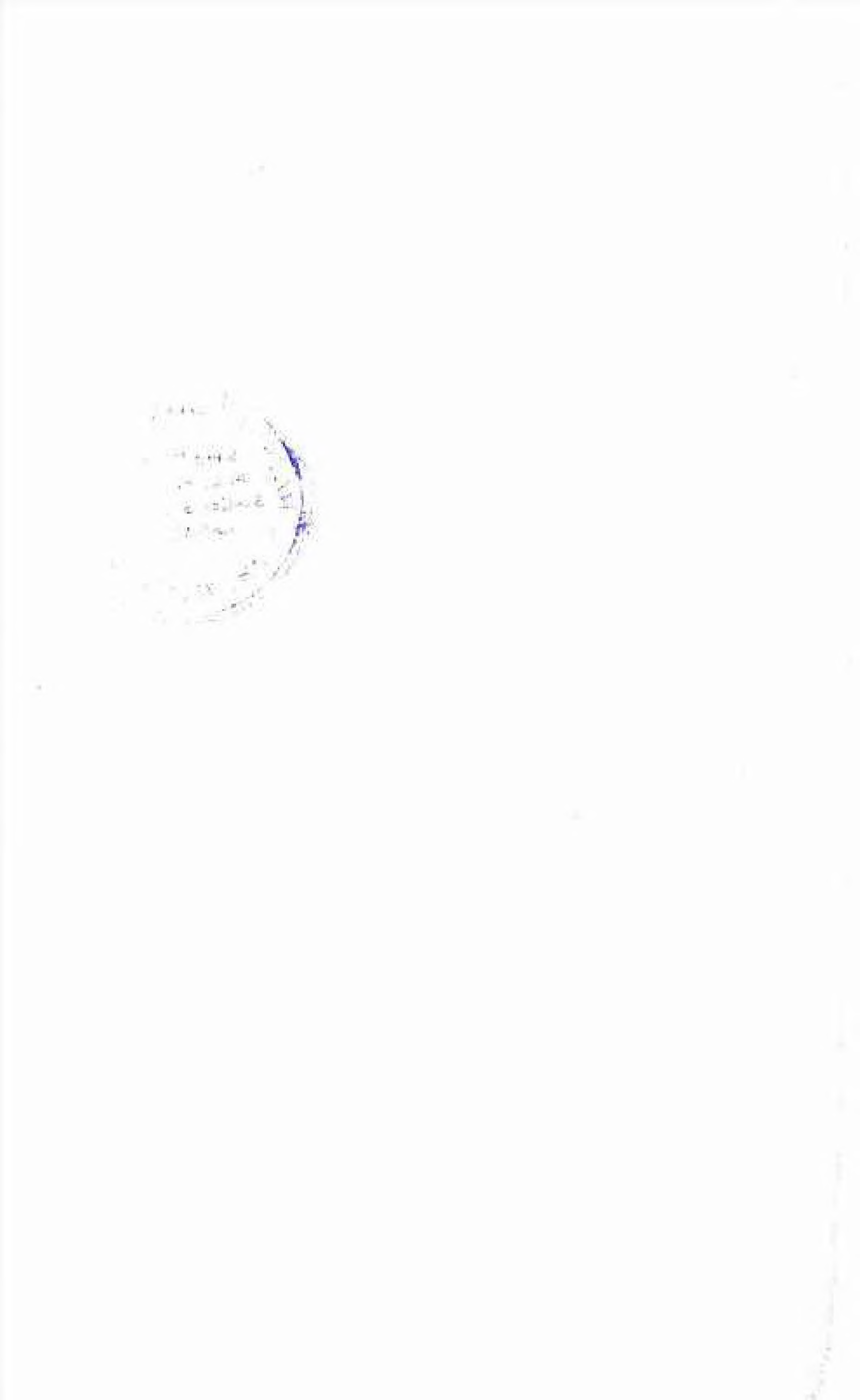
nam Muḥammad al-Bāqir was one of the most rudite Muslims of his age and played a significant ole in the history of early Islam. At once a versale leader and scholar, he was also an authority n the exegesis of the Qur'an, the traditions of the rophet and all matters relating to the rites, rituals nd practices of Islām.

Ising hitherto largely ignored Shi'i sources, both ublished and unpublished, Arzina R. Lalani xplores al-Bāqir's pivotal contributions to Islamic ought in its early formative period, contributions at were powerfully to affect developments in hi'i law, theology and religious practice. This udy gives particular attention to al-Bāqir's vital ole in the formulation of the function and nature f the imamate itself.

r Lalani's work presents the first systematic ccount of the life, career and teachings of this rilliant eighth-century luminary. It will be of reat benefit to students of Islamic law, history nd theology and will also be of interest to odern Shi'i communities of all persuasions.

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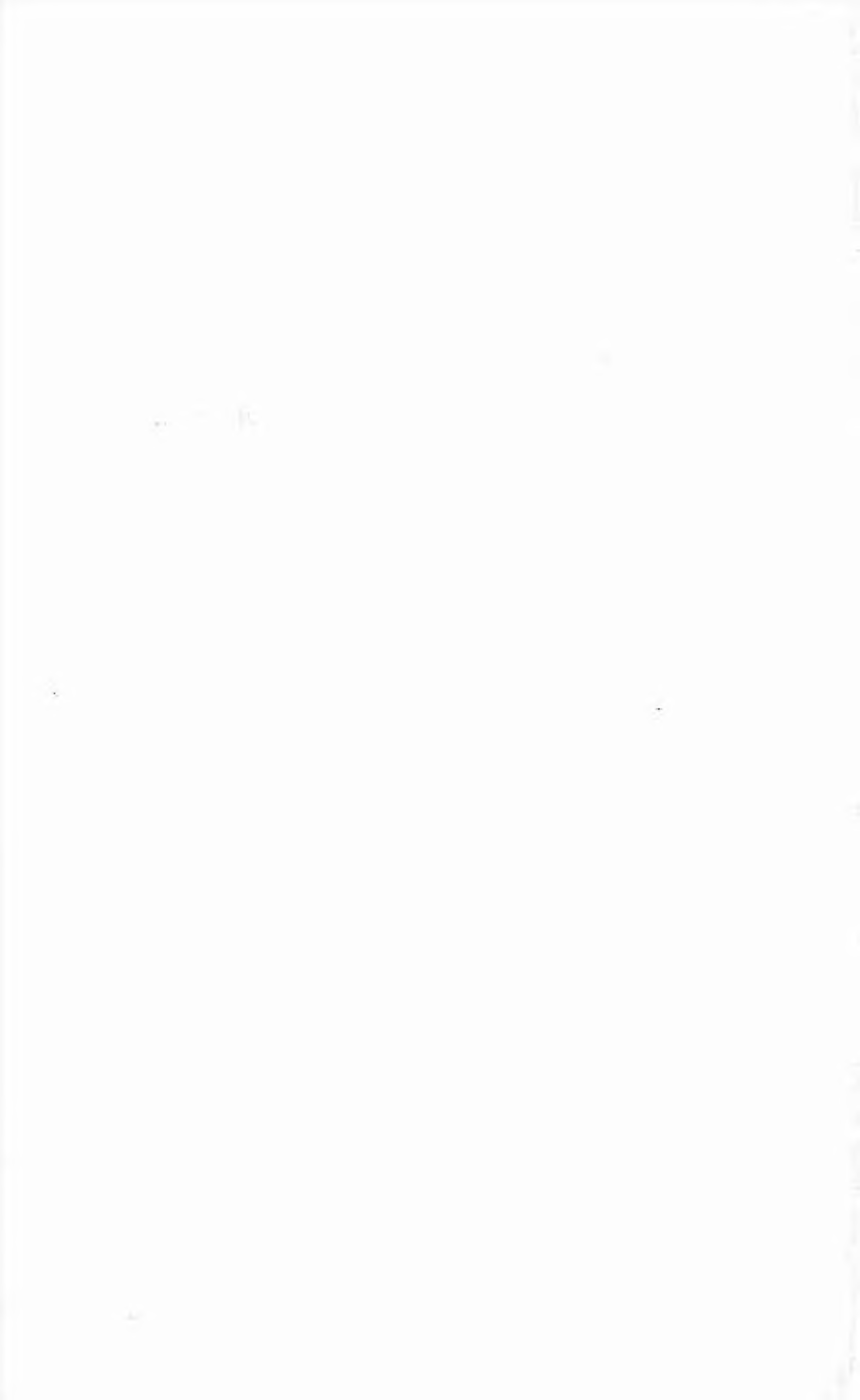
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As a token of my love for Him who inspired me
to undertake this study





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3. Editions or translations of significant primary or secondary texts.
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Contents

Preface

This study examines Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir's role in the development of Shīʿī thought. 'Thought' rather than 'theology' is justified here because, during the period under consideration, religious doctrine was at the centre of the intellectual and political life of the Muslim community. It had not yet become an academic preserve for trained theologians. In an environment where the early discussions and differences in the community were focused on the question of who has the right to rule, and contending with several competing groups, al-Bāqir elaborated the idea of a non-rebelling imamate. This was significant and timely as many had come to believe that the point of claiming the imamate was to bid for power, that is, political power. Al-Bāqir held that the institution of the imamate was hereditary in nature and did not depend upon the *khurūj* (rising) of the imam.

The strength of al-Bāqir's school was its conviction that, before his death, the Prophet had expressly designated and appointed ʿAlī as his successor by *naṣṣ*. This meant that the imam's authority did not depend on any human electors or the *bayʿa* of the people. The hereditary character of the *naṣṣ* was the crucial point in the doctrine put forward by al-Bāqir. Until then several contestants had maintained that they had received the *naṣṣ* from one individual or another. Thus, the idea of a hereditary *naṣṣ* restricted the number of those who

could claim leadership of the community.

Furthermore, since al-Bāqir held that the imam was endowed with hereditary ʿ*ilm* on account of the *naṣṣ*, 'true knowledge' was confined only to the imam in the Prophet's family, not to every member of the Prophet's family, and certainly not to the whole community. He therefore held that the traditions of the community as a whole were not valid as a proper source for law. Only the traditions from the imam, or the traditions from the Prophet as attested by the imams, were allowed. This attitude of al-Bāqir's school toward the majority of the early community of the Prophet's companions was to change the legal pattern of the Shīʿa in the years to come. The basis of Shīʿī law and theology emerged from this attitude and was further elaborated within the circle of al-Bāqir's adherents. He thus laid the foundation of a separate school of jurisprudence – the *madhhab ahl al-bayt* – having distinct views on many aspects of *fiqh*. It is interesting to note, however, that the reason for the establishment of the *madhhab ahl al-bayt* arises not so much from the sphere of doctrine as in that of religious practice.

This book has been a labour of love and devotion for Him who inspired me to undertake the study. In the writing of a book of this kind, many friends, relatives, colleagues and 'educators' inevitably play a part. I cannot name them all, but foremost among them are my supervisor, Dr Ian Howard, with whose support the first version of this work was completed; Professor Wilferd Madelung, who was not only my examiner but who played a significant role in every sense of the word during the preparation of the book; and Dr Farhad Daftary, who not only invited me to submit my work for publication, but also saw me through the challenging process of converting a doctoral dissertation into a book. I owe a great debt to them all.

In taking this work through its innumerable drafts and redrafts, I have had enormous intellectual and technical support from various colleagues and associates, especially at The Institute of Ismaili Studies. I cannot name them all but I would like

to acknowledge particularly the Director, Professor Azim Nanji, the Board of Governors and the several heads of departments, the academic and administrative staff, and especially the library staff. The editorial staff of the Department of Academic Research and Publications, particularly Kutub Kassam and Nadia Holmes have been extremely helpful. Shafique Virani, a visiting scholar from Harvard University and Dr Reza Shah-Kazemi, a colleague and a research associate, not only went through my entire manuscript meticulously, saving me from many errors, but also gave the much-needed moral support that an author needs when a work is in its last stages.

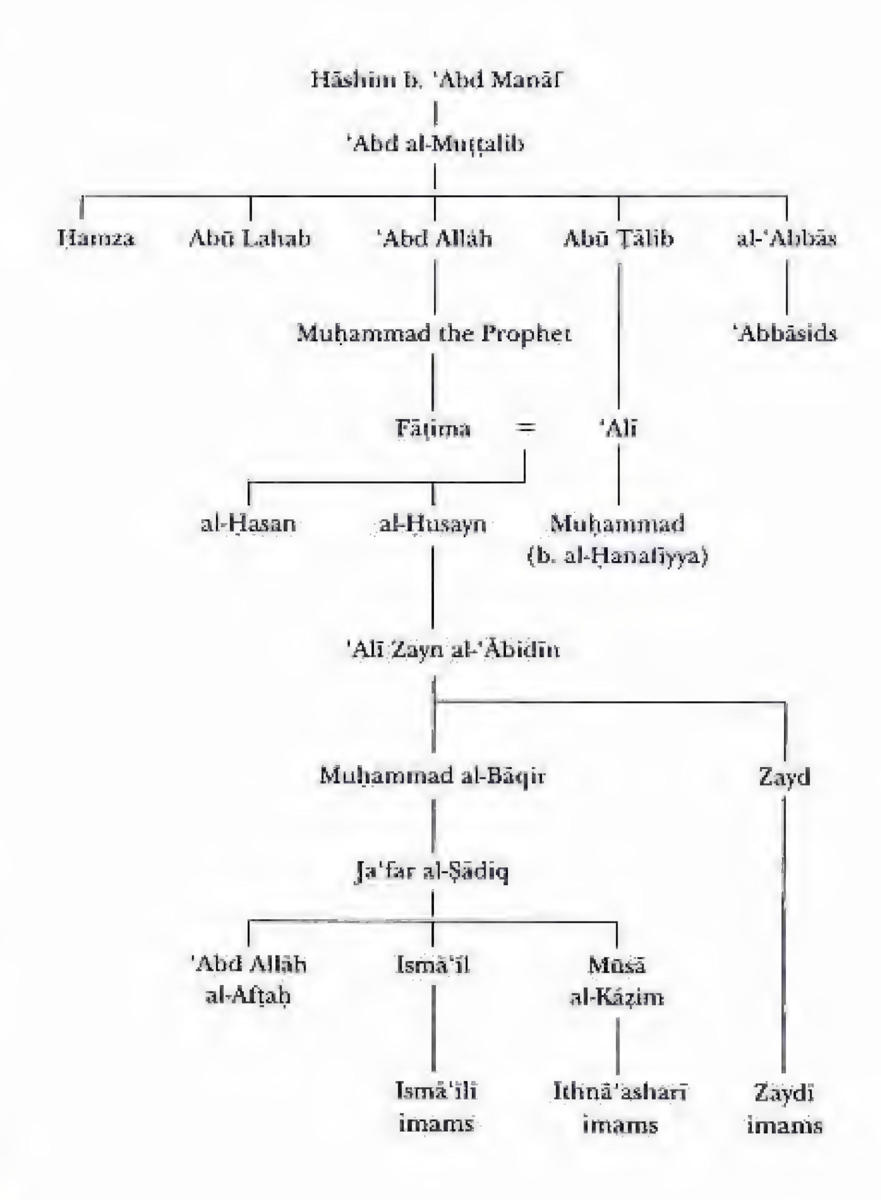
To my parents, my brother, my sister and my three adorable children, all I can say is thank you for your unflinching support in times of hardship and distress. I am also deeply conscious of God's guiding hand in this respect.

Arzina R. Lalani
London, 2000

Abbreviations

BSO(A)S	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies*
EIR	*Encyclopaedia Iranica*
EI	*The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, first edition
EI2	*The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBBRAS	*Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JRAS	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
MW	*Muslim World*
REI	*Revue des études Islamiques*
SI	*Studia Islamica*

The Banū Hāshim and Early Shī'ī Imams



CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The study of Shī'ism has been one of the most neglected branches of Islamic studies in the West. During the last few decades, however, a select group of scholars have devoted serious attention to specific areas of Shī'ī Islam. The pioneers in this group include Rudolph Strothmann (1877–1960) and Louis Massignon (1883–1962) followed by Henry Corbin (1903–1978). The contributions of Corbin are unique in providing an invaluable understanding of Shī'ī thought, both Ismaili and Ithnā'ashari. More recently, scholars like Etan Kohlberg, Wilferd Madelung, Heinz Halm, Husain M. Jafri, Moojan Momen, Farhad Daftary, M. A. Amir-Moezzi and others have greatly enhanced our understanding of Shī'ī Islam.

Despite this recent research, the history and doctrinal development of Shī'ī Islam, especially the first two centuries, have not received the share of modern scholarship they deserve. The Shī'a have generally been regarded by Sunnī heresiographers as 'deviators' from the 'norm', representing a heterodoxy as opposed to an orthodoxy. Many later Western scholars of Islam, too, have adopted the same dichotomy and have treated Shī'ī Islam as a heresy. Considering that we owe most of our sources to those who were in due course to become the Sunnī majority, it is not surprising that the Shī'īs are assumed to have diverged from the 'true path'. The 'orthodoxy–heterodoxy' dichotomy gives a very simplistic view of an

extremely complex doctrinal development which evolved over several centuries. In addition, this dichotomy, when understood from a Christian context, is inappropriate because of the absence of any central ecclesiastical authority in Islam.

Muslim society is, and always has been, pluralistic. The message of Islam was revealed in the cultural milieu of the time and the resulting responses had to be gradual, interactive and diverse. In the course of its rapid expansion, the *umma* established by the Prophet assimilated a variety of social groups with extremely diverse traditions and inclinations. This encounter of Islam with a kaleidoscope of traditions naturally meant varied interpretation as well as understanding. For the Shīʿa themselves, Shīʿism is one response to the message of Islam, a response in which the role of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib is pivotal. The Shīʿa see their genesis in the Qurʾān and in the special rapport that existed between the Prophet and ʿAlī. This is based on certain Qurʾānic verses, several traditions of the Prophet and various historical events that took place during the lifetime of the Prophet. More specifically, the Shīʿa believe that the Prophet Muḥammad appointed ʿAlī as his successor at Ghadīr Khumm not long before he died.[3]

Shīʿism has usually been explained with reference to political and social factors. More emphasis needs to be placed on the religious phenomenon of Shīʿī Islam which was the crucial factor in determining its external history. In this sense, Shīʿism is believed to have existed at the time of the Prophet, when a group of individuals including Salmān al-Fārisī, Abū Dharr al-Ghiffārī, al-Miqdād b. al-Aswad al-Kindī and ʿAmmār b. Yāsir used to be referred to as *Shīʿat ʿAlī* and Aṣḥāb ʿAlī.[4] The word Shīʿa literally means follower or supporter, and in the early days of Islam it was used in conjunction with other individuals such as ʿUthmān and Muʿāwiya. With time, however, the word came to specifically denote those who supported ʿAlī, both religiously and politically.

Historically, the roots of Shīʿī Islam go back to the time immediately following the Prophet Muḥammad's death when Abū Bakr was elected by some of the companions as the Prophet's

successor, or *khalīfa* (caliph) at the *saqīfa* (assembly hall) of Banū Sa'āda in Medina. The election was carried out in haste as the rivalry between the Anṣār (indigenous Medinans) and the Muhājirūn (Meccan immigrants) threatened to split the community. 'Alī, who was a cousin of the Prophet as well as his son-in-law, was not present at the deliberations since he had stayed at the Prophet's deathbed. Although 'Alī was not sent for, it is significant that at the *saqīfa* some people did object to giving *bay'a* (allegiance) to Abū Bakr, declaring that they would not offer *bay'a* to anyone but 'Alī. Such sentiments, contained in the earliest surviving historical material, are extremely important from an historian's point of view.

These sentiments survived in varying degrees during the period when the Muslims were led by Abū Bakr for over two years and then by 'Umar for nearly ten years. Upon 'Umar's death, 'Alī was offered the caliphate on condition that he rule according to the Qur'ān and the *sunna* of the Prophet as well as the precedents set by Abū Bakr and 'Umar. Some traditions maintain that he declined the second condition, while others maintain that he agreed to do so to the best of his ability. However, his reply was considered evasive and the caliphate was offered to 'Uthmān. It was in 'Uthmān's time that a popular movement first appeared in Kūfa in favour of 'Alī, calling for the removal of 'Uthmān. Mālik al-Ashtar became the leader of the movement, and although he and the Kūfans played no role in the siege of the caliph's palace carried out by the Egyptians, he played a major role in securing 'Alī's succession. 'Uthmān was assassinated during the insurrection in Medina and amidst this chaos 'Alī was elected as the fourth caliph in the year 35/656. He immediately had to face a rebellion from two of the Prophet's companions, Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr, who were joined by 'Ā'isha, a widow of the Prophet and daughter of Abū Bakr. The three were defeated by 'Alī at the Battle of the Camel with particular help from Mālik al-Ashtar, who managed to arouse Kūfan support. But 'Alī also encountered major opposition from Mu'āwiya, a relative of 'Uthmān and the governor of Syria. This led to the prolonged and inconclusive Battle of Ṣiffīn in

36/657, as well as to the secession of the Khawārij (Khārijiyya) or 'separatists' from ʿAlī's army.

In 40/661, when ʿAlī was assassinated by a Khārijī, Ibn Muljam, his son al-Ḥasan was elected caliph. However, al-Ḥasan ceded the caliphate to Muʿāwiya, who had managed to bribe his commanders and was threatening to attack. Muʿāwiya then went on to found the Umayyad dynasty (41/661–132/750). After the death of al-Ḥasan, his brother al-Ḥusayn, counting on the support promised by the people of Kūfa, eventually set out to challenge Yazīd, son of Muʿāwiya, who had succeeded to the Umayyad throne. But the promised support crumbled and al-Ḥusayn met his tragic death at the hands of Umayyad forces at Karbala in 61/680. This tragedy evoked powerful emotions and became the focus of profound themes of guilt and betrayal. ʿAlī and his sons, especially al-Ḥusayn, played a significant role in promoting Shīʿī sympathies.

ʿAlī is assigned a crucial role in history by all Muslims. To the Sunnīs, he was a great champion of Islam in its early struggle to survive, and one of the 'rightly-guided' caliphs who features as the fountainhead of esoteric knowledge. ʿAlī figures at the head of most of the initiatory chains (*silsilas*) of Ṣūfī orders and he is also credited with laying down the first rules of Arabic grammar. To the Shīʿa, however, ʿAlī had a special spiritual function alongside that of the Prophet, which, in their view, gave him pre-eminence and endowed him with the right to the leadership or imamate, and this function was passed on by designation to his descendants. The Prophet Muḥammad's affection and regard for ʿAlī were evident to all. As noted, they were cousins, and ʿAlī was married to the Prophet's daughter Fāṭima. In addition, Ibn Isḥāq notes that the youthful ʿAlī had been brought up in Muḥammad's care, and was the first male to believe in him and accept the message of Islam. Muḥammad himself had been brought up in the household of ʿAlī's father, Abū Ṭālib, who at the time was the chief of the Banū Hāshim clan of the Quraysh.

In the lifetime of the Prophet, his close kin (*ahl al-bayt*) enjoyed a unique religious status recognised by the Qurʾān. More

specifically, 'Alī had a special rapport with the Prophet which did not go unnoticed among certain sections of the community. As is known, 'Alī was singled out by the Prophet for certain important tasks and was involved in many far-reaching decisions which were either preceded or followed by Qur'ānic injunctions. At the age of thirteen, 'Alī responded to the Prophet's earliest request for help when the injunction was revealed: 'And warn thy clan, thy nearest of kin' (26:214).[3] On the night when the Prophet left Mecca for Medina, 'Alī occupied his bed, shocking the conspirators who had come to kill the Prophet. When the Prophet emigrated to Medina he established an *ukhūwwa* (or brotherhood) so that every *muhājir* had an *anṣār* as a brother; he himself chose 'Alī as his brother, another indication of his affinity towards him.[4]

In the course of Islam's struggle for survival, 'Alī's display of courage made him a renowned warrior whose stamina and skill were to become legendary. In most early expeditions, such as Badr and Khaybar, 'Alī was the standard-bearer, and at Fadak and Yemen he led as a commander. Holding the standard at Khaybar was another of 'Alī's distinctions; this much coveted honour was bestowed after the Prophet announced that the banner would be given to the man who loved God, His Messenger and through whom God would grant victory.[5] The famous tradition 'You are to me as Aaron was to Moses', recorded by almost all historians and traditionists, was addressed to 'Alī when the Prophet, on leaving for the Tabuk expedition, appointed his son-in-law as his deputy. Furthermore, the task of communicating the *Sūra al-Barā'a* to the people of Mecca was initially given to Abū Bakr, but following a Qur'ānic revelation 'Alī was asked to deliver the message, retrieving the chapter from Abū Bakr.[6]

Another relevant episode is that of *mubāhala* (mutual cursing) which is connected with the Qur'ānic verse 3:61 where the Prophet is addressed: 'If anyone disputes with you in this matter [concerning Jesus] after knowledge has come to you, say: "Come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, then let us swear an

oath and place the curse on those who lie."'[6] This verse was revealed when the Christian delegation from Najrān visited the Prophet in the year 10/631–2 because they did not accept the Islamic doctrine on Jesus. Although the *mubāhala* did not, the reports tell us, take place, as the Christians excused themselves from it, the Prophet's proposal to involve the family in this ritual under such religious circumstances, and its sanction by the Qur'ān, must have raised the status of his family.

The Qur'ān thus accords the *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet an elevated position above the rest of the faithful. In the light of the narrations of the Qur'ān on the succession of the previous prophets,[7] it is highly probable that the Prophet saw his own succession in the same light. As the Shī'a see it, the Prophet was, in his own way, preparing the Muslims and giving them indications of his preference before declaring 'Alī as the *mawlā* (or 'master') of the people at Ghadīr Khumm. It seems rather odd that if, as the Sunnīs hold, the Prophet did not designate a successor, Abū Bakr should break with the Prophet's *sunna* by explicitly appointing 'Umar as his successor as well as putting it in writing. This suggests the possibility of the Shī'ī view that the Prophet did in fact appoint 'Alī explicitly, but that the community decided to ignore his choice.

Until the time of al-Ḥusayn, there seems to have been no dispute about leadership among the Shi'a themselves. After his tragedy, differences arose resulting in various Shī'ī groups. These groups acknowledged imams mainly from the descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, the sons of Alī by Fāṭima, and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya, his son by Khawla of the Banū Ḥanīfa tribe. The identity of the Shī'ī imams, that is, which of 'Alī's descendants inherited his authority, as well as the discussion about the nature and extent of his authority, have always been one of the main reasons for the existence of several tendencies and inclinations among the Shī'a who, from the time of al-Ḥusayn, were never a monolithic group.

Within a year of al-Ḥusayn's tragedy, a movement known as the Tawwābūn (Penitents), those who repented their inability to help al-Ḥusayn in his hour of trial, arose to fight the

Umayyads. However, they were overwhelmed by the Umayyad forces and most of them lost their lives. Those who survived joined al-Mukhtār b. Abī 'Ubayd al-Thaqafī, who had been in exile for his participation in the Kūfan revolt under Muslim b. 'Aqīl, and who organised his own movement calling for the avenging of al-Ḥusayn's death. It is believed that al-Ḥusayn's son Zayn al-'Ābidīn was approached and, on his refusal, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya became the figurehead of Mukhtār's movement. Mukhtār was able to mobilise the *mawālī*, the non-Arab Muslims who were treated as second class citizens under the Umayyads. In 66/685 he successfully revolted in Kūfa, proclaiming Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya as the Mahdī, the divinely-guided saviour who would establish justice on earth and deliver the oppressed from tyranny (*ẓulm*). This doctrine proved very appealing to the *mawālī*, who were considered socially and racially inferior to Arab Muslims. They provided a valuable recruiting ground for any movement opposed to the exclusively Arab order under the Umayyads. Mukhtār's success proved short-lived but his movement survived under the name of Kaysāniyya.

Meanwhile, a small group of Shī'a supported al-Ḥusayn's only surviving son, 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, who carried the title of Zayn al-'Ābidīn, 'the Ornament of the Pious'. The situation in which he found himself after Karbala led Zayn al-'Ābidīn to avoid participation in political life. Under Zayn al-'Ābidīn's son Muḥammad al-Bāqir, who is the subject of this study, this group, later known as the Imāmiyya, began to acquire prominence. It has been generally assumed that al-Bāqir led an inconspicuous life. Some modern scholars have not only doubted his achievements, but even doubt whether he claimed the imamate for himself.[8] However, an investigation of these issues, from the Shī'ī as well as the general Islamic perspective, suggests that there is substantial evidence to show that, although al-Bāqir refrained from taking part in active politics, he played a significant role in history, both from an intellectual and religious point of view. He emerges as a versatile leader and scholar conversant not only in matters of rites and rituals, but also in the

exegesis of the Qur'ān, the traditions of the Prophet, questions pertaining to law as well as theological topics of both a mundane and a spiritual nature. Before al-Bāqir's time, Shī'ī learning had not come into its own. Al-Bāqir's life saw a flowering of knowledge in various fields. That he played a pivotal role in this cusp of history is attested by the vast number of traditions that have been reported from him. He was also the first Shī'ī imam to engage in systematic teaching.

Al-Bāqir lived at a critical juncture in Islamic history. The study of the Qur'ān was a principal concern of Muslims. Steps were taken to establish a more adequate script as well as to construct rules of Arabic grammar in order to preserve the Qur'ānic text from corruption. The first such attempts were made in Kūfa and Baṣra, for it was there that the need was first felt. However, Medina, where al-Bāqir resided, continued to be regarded as the centre of religious learning where the foundation of studies connected with the Qur'ān was laid. The interpretation of the Qur'ān also necessitated a careful study of its grammatical structure and vocabulary, giving rise to the twin sciences of philology and lexicography. The manner in which Qur'ānic passages were applied was based on recollections of actions or sayings of the Prophet which had some bearing on the subject of the text. Rules for conducting daily life and affairs were also sought in the practice of the Prophet (*sunna*). Thus the science of tradition (*ḥadīth*) came into being. The study of the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* formed the basis upon which the study of *kalām* (theology) and *fiqh* (jurisprudence) were built. Thus, al-Bāqir lived at a time when various scholars were pursuing these studies and travelling far and wide in search of traditions. These traditions necessarily included much historical material, mainly about the Prophet's military expeditions (*maghāzī*) as well as other aspects of his life (*sīra*). Alongside this material, however, accounts of early Islamic history also began to appear.

By the time of al-Bāqir, the various groups had begun to argue over different juridical issues. The traditionists opposed the jurists regarding the position of the *sunna* of the Prophet

and the exegetes gave varying interpretations of Qur'ānic verses, all apparently based on Prophetic traditions. Furthermore, serious theological discussions took place among scholars on topics revolving around the imamate such as *īmān*, *islām* and *qaḍā' wa qadar*, some of which had obvious political undertones. Therefore, it is also to this period that we may trace the rudiments of many of those religio-philosophical movements and religio-political communities which formed the earliest sects such as the Khārijiyya, the Qadariyya and the Murji'a. The Shī'a, one of the camps into which the Muslims split on the issue of the imamate, also took clear shape during al-Bāqir's period.

As noted earlier, it was over the person and function of the head of the community that differences and discussions arose. This naturally evoked different responses and opinions. One of these concerned the question of the fitness of the ruler to rule when he sins. This doctrine of 'sin' became the most characteristic feature of the Khārijiyya, who seceded from 'Alī's army, protesting at the proposal to arbitrate. They put forward the slogan '*lā ḥukm illā lillāh*', 'decision belongs to God alone'. They believed that any Muslim, including the imam, on committing a mortal sin becomes an apostate and hence deserves death.

At the opposite extreme to the Khārijiyya, and mainly as a reaction to it, were the Murji'a, who shrank from judging human conduct, leaving this exclusively to God, to be determined after death. By refusing the *umma* the right to judge, the Murji'a denied the duty to 'enjoin good and forbid evil', thus encouraging political quietism. But the question of human or moral responsibility continued to trouble the community. From around 70/690, the Qadariyya, so called because they debated the meaning of the Qur'ānic term *qadar*, 'predeterminism', upheld in one form or another the principle of free will, believing that man was the author of his acts and human will was free. The term *qadari* seems to have been used in diverse senses by various people. In Baṣra, the Qadariyya were a school of theology, but in Syria they were primarily a movement holding that the ruler was answerable for his actions, and that if he

should be guilty of unrighteousness he should abdicate or be removed.

The reaction to this view was the emergence of the Jabariyya, who held that man's actions were completely predetermined. In addition to these movements or schools, *ad hoc* responses to problematic situations were made by individuals with greater or lesser influence such as the companions, mystics and political leaders. It was in such an environment that al-Bāqir responded to the numerous queries that were brought to him by Shīʿa and non-Shīʿa alike.

During al-Bāqir's time, many groups were dissatisfied with their rulers. The pious were undoubtedly disturbed at the state of affairs into which society had sunk. They detested especially the rulers who, by leading a luxurious life themselves, set an undesirable example to others, thus sanctioning that which religion abhorred. The twin cities of Mecca and Medina, especially Mecca, had been transformed into centres of luxury where wealth and singing girls from the conquered lands poured in. This led many people to indulge in pastimes like chess, backgammon, dice and habits such as drinking and gambling. In such an atmosphere it was not long before poetry began to reappear, especially of the sensual type like that of ʿUmar b. Abī Rabīʿa in Mecca and Jamīl in Medina.

Another cause of widespread discontent was the division of society between the ruling class, formed by the caliph's family and the aristocracy of Arab conquerors, and the non-Arab Muslims who were clients (*mawālī*) to the Arab tribes. Their espousal of Shīʿī and Khārijī causes in ʿIrāq, Persia and elsewhere was one way in which the *mawālī* expressed their dissatisfaction. Thirdly, there were the non-Muslims, i.e. Christians, Jews and others who were known as *dhimmīs* for the tribute they paid in return for protection (*dhimma*). Last on the social ladder stood the slaves.

Thus, during the period in which al-Bāqir lived, groups of Muslims expressed their dissatisfaction in a number of ways – some resorting to political action, some acquiescing and others diverting their energies to religious learning. At the same

time, these groups placed before the people some hope of liberation which, they believed, could only be achieved through a divinely-inspired leader. Most believed that this leader, al-Mahdī, the rightly-guided, could come only from the Prophet's family, the *ahl al-bayt*. Since the identity of the *ahl al-bayt*, especially after al-Ḥusayn, was open to speculation, many members of the Prophet's family exploited the situation and a variety of competing organisations appeared, each claiming some connection with the Prophet's family. Among the dissatisfied were several Shī'ī groups. Many of these not only publicly denounced the Umayyads but wanted to take immediate political action against the established regime. Thus the various groups such as those organised by Mukhtār, the Kaysāniyya in its various branches, the Zaydiyya and its sister branches as well as other 'Alids like al-Ḥasan al-Muthannā, who promoted the cause of his son al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, all put forward different conceptions of the imam and the imamate.

For example, the Kaysāniyya believed in the idea of a future deliverer who would restore justice. This notion stemmed from their eschatological doctrine of *ghayba*, the absence or occultation of an imam who will reappear as the *mahdi*. Other doctrines which distinguished the Kaysāniyya were that they condemned the first three caliphs before 'Alī as usurpers and considered 'Alī and his three sons, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn and Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya, as successive, divinely appointed imams endowed with supernatural qualities. They taught *raj'a*, the return to life of the *mahdi* with his supporters for retribution before the *qiyāma*. They also believed in *badā'*, the possibility of a change in God's decisions. The Zaydiyya, on the other hand, propagated a more aggressive and revolutionary policy. They did not believe that the imamate was hereditary in nature. For them, the whole point of claiming the imamate was to bid for power, that is political power. This implied that the imam had to rise, sword in hand, seize power and thus gain recognition and authority.

To bring some sort of order to the chaos that prevailed, and to the divergent concepts of the imamate, al-Bāqir put forward

his own theory of the imamate based on the Qurʾān and *ḥadīth*. He also explained the necessary qualities and attributes that an imam had to possess, such as ʿ*ilm* and ʿ*iṣma*. These distinguished the imam from others and made him *afḍal al-nās*, the best of mankind. In this manner, the imam declared himself as the representative of God on earth and the rightful interpreter of His words. By demonstrating the imam's role in providing both true knowledge in this world and intercession in the hereafter, al-Bāqir also proposed a theory of the imamate that was not necessarily political and therefore did not depend on the acquisition of political power. This was quite timely as many had come to believe by then that the imam had to rise and assert his claims to political power. Since al-Bāqir's theory did not pose a direct threat to the reigning Umayyads he was left in peace to pursue his intellectual and religious activities.

Around the same time the pious – usually referred to as the general religious movement or the 'pious movement' – were also beginning to construct all-encompassing religious and ethical codes of conduct. The result was a variety of interpretations given by different scholars on a number of questions. Evidence from this period shows that al-Bāqir was an eminent and distinguished scholar of *ḥadīth*. Numerous people sought his advice on many issues as well as the traditions of the Prophet on which he was considered a reliable authority. Al-Bāqir played a significant role in the development of the prophetic traditions. Just before his time, the *sunna* was considered the 'custom' of a particular place and many scholars would give judgements according to the 'custom' of their own particular area rather than the traditions of the Prophet. Along with the 'pious movement', al-Bāqir emphasised the importance of the *sunna* of the Prophet, but whereas the former included the traditions of the whole community – the traditions of the early community as well as those of the Prophet – al-Bāqir accepted only traditions of the Prophet that were reported by the imams from the Prophet's family.

Al-Bāqir's approach formed the basis from which Shīʿī law

and theology emerged. He thus became instrumental in founding a separate school, the *madhhab ahl al-bayt*, having distinct views on many aspects of *fiqh*. Moreover, like the *aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*, al-Bāqir and his school also rejected the use of *ra'y* (opinion) and *qiyās* (analogy) when giving judgements on juridical questions. Thus, amidst the varying interpretations given by the different scholars, al-Bāqir's followers were able to seek advice and guidance from him on such legal matters and this distinguished them from other groups.

Al-Bāqir also contributed to the theological doctrines concerning *īmān, taqiyya, qaḍā' wa qadar*, the unity of God, as well as a host of other topics that were discussed and hotly debated in his time. Thus, he emerges not only as the guide and spiritual leader of a particular group, having founded a separate school and provided a doctrinal basis for it, but also as one of the most distinguished scholars of the period, disseminating knowledge on all aspects of Muslim life.

As noted earlier, scholarly studies of the early history of Shī'ī Islam have been deplorably inadequate. This has been mainly because contemporary Shī'ī sources have not been available, and because of the persistence of an Orientalist tendency to study Shī'ism from a Sunnī perspective. For this reason, in addition to the general Islamic sources and Western studies on the period, particular attention will be paid in this study to Shī'ī sources which have so far been virtually ignored. Among the general Islamic sources that have been used, the most important are the chronicles such as those produced by al-Ṭabarī (d. 311/923) and al-Ya'qūbī (d. 284/897). Then there are the biographies of prominent figures in collections such as the *Ansāb al-ashrāf* of al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892), the *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa'd (d. 231/845) and the *Ta'rīkh madīnat al-Dimashq* of Ibn 'Asākir (d. 572/1176), which is essentially a biographical dictionary. Some relevant background material is also found in works written on the theme of the Arab conquests (*futūḥ*) such as the *Futūḥ al-buldān* of al-Balādhurī, the *Futūḥ Miṣr* of Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam and the *Kitāb al-futūḥ* of Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī (fl. 2nd–3rd/9th century).

Poetry from the period by poets such as Abū al-Aswad al-Du'alī, Kumayt, Farazdaq and others has also proved useful, as has the collection of verses and biographical details about poets in the *Kitāb al-aghānī* of Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī (d. 357/967). Another such work is the *Kitāb al-shi'r wa'l-shu'arā'* of Ibn Qutayba. There is also a tradition of heresiographical works in which the beliefs, practices and the main personalities of the various Muslim groups involved are described. One of the earliest is the *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* of al-Ash'arī (d. 324/935). However, al-Shahrastānī's (d. 548/1153) *Kitāb al-milal wa al-niḥal*, although late, is an outstanding work in this category. In addition, general Muslim works on *tafsīr* and *ḥadīth*, as well as the biographical literature such as *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb* of Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī are useful. These and other such works have been listed in the bibliography under general Islamic sources and have been used extensively.

An attempt has been made in this survey to include Shī'ī sources of all persuasions – Zaydī, Ithnā'asharī and Ismaili. Among the Zaydī sources, one particular manuscript has been extensively used, especially in the chapter on al-Bāqir's contribution to *fiqh*, namely the *Amālī Aḥmad b. 'Īsā* of Muḥammad b. Manṣūr al-Murādī,[9] which contains many traditions of al-Bāqir reported from Abū al-Jārūd on different juridical issues such as prayer, divorce, the rites of pilgrimage and other miscellaneous aspects of *fiqh*. Alongside the *Majmū' al-fiqh* attributed to Zayd b. 'Alī, other Zaydī sources have been used mainly from the quotations of Western scholars.

As far as Ithnā'asharī sources are concerned, the earliest extant works are collections of *ḥadīth* known as *uṣūl* (singular *aṣl*). The number of *uṣūl* is usually estimated at 400, of which only thirteen are known to have survived in manuscript. Their contents include traditions of a historical, doctrinal, legal, anecdotal and polemical nature. At a later stage, these various *uṣūl*, most of which are attributed to the disciples of Imams Bāqir and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq,[10] were incorporated into larger works known as *jawāmi'* which in turn served as sources for subsequent Shī'ī works. Among Ithnā'asharī compilations a unique position

is occupied by those concerned with the virtues and prerogatives of the imams. One of the earliest of these to have survived is the *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt* of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṣaffār al-Qummī (d. 290/963). It is believed that al-Ṣaffār included in this work many of the sayings from a document (*ṣaḥīfa*) which the Prophet dictated to 'Alī.[11] Many of the traditions found in the *Baṣā'ir* were incorporated by Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī (d. 329/941) in his major work *al-Kāfī fī 'ilm al-dīn* which is divided into three parts: *al-uṣūl, al-furū'* and *al-rawḍa*. It is the *uṣūl* and *furū'* which are relevant to this study.

A work that is rarely used by scholars is the *Ithbāt al-waṣiyya* attributed to al-Mas'ūdī (d. 346/957) in which the transfer of the ruling authority and the religious testament of the ancient patriarchs from generation to generation since the creation of Adam is described. Another work that also has traditions on the nature of the imamate, as well as on other theological issues, is the *Risāla al-i'tiqādāt al-imāmiyya* of Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. 'Alī Ibn Bābawayh (d. 381/991).

In addition to traditions regarding the imamate, there are numerous others dealing with the virtues of 'Alī, the first imam, and his right to rule. These are grouped together under titles such as *Khaṣā'iṣ, Manāqib* or *Faḍā'il 'Alī*. Among many such works mention may be made of the *Khaṣā'iṣ Amīr al-Mu'minīn* of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/1015). The biography of 'Alī and other imams has been dealt with by the renowned Ithnā'asharī scholar, Muḥammad b. al-Nu'mān al-Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413/1022) in his *Kitāb al-irshād*. Al-Mufīd is also the author of the *Kitāb al-jamal* which contains traditions relating to the Battle of the Camel (36/656). Another work used in this study is the *Nahj al-balāgha*, the sermons of 'Alī as collected by al-Sharīf al-Raḍī.

An invaluable source of traditions is provided by the early Shī'ī Qur'ān commentaries. One such work is the *Tafsīr al-Qummī* of Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī (d.c. 307/919). This *Tafsīr* contains much historical material related to the *Sīra* but hardly pays any attention to linguistic problems and ignores many difficult Qur'ānic passages, perhaps due to

its polemical nature. Al-Qummī's first transmitter, Abū al-Faḍl al-ʿAbbās b. Muḥammad b. al-Qāsim, incorporated into the work traditions from the *Tafsīr Abū al-Jārūd*, otherwise referred to as the *Kitāb al-Bāqir* by Ibn al-Nadīm. This is the Qur'ān commentary which Abū al-Jārūd Ziyād b. al-Mundhir transmitted from al-Bāqir. Other later Qur'ān commentaries include *al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* of Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) and the *Majmūʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* of al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭibrisī (d. 548/1153). These commentaries also contain many traditions although their main concern is with legal, linguistic and doctrinal problems.

Besides the *Uṣūl al-arbaʿu-mi'ah* and the *Furūʿ min al-kāfī* mentioned earlier, Shīʿī traditions of a legal nature are also found in the *Man lā yaḥḍuruhu al-faqīh* of Ibn Bābawayh and Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭūsī's *Tahdhīb al-aḥkām* and *al-Istibṣār*. In fact legal traditions are also found in al-Ḥimyarī's *Qurb al-isnād* which is earlier than al-Kulaynī's *al-Kāfī*. Another earlier work which has a section on jurisprudence is the *Kitāb al-maḥāsin* of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālid al-Barqī (d. 274/887). Al-Barqī is also the author of the *Kitāb al-rijāl* in which he has listed the followers of the various imams. Later writers have commented upon these traditions, of which one of the most popular is the *Wasā'il al-Shīʿa ilā aḥādīth al-sharīʿa* by Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī (d. 1104/1693).

Another category of Shīʿī traditions are works known as the *amālī*. These are dictations taken down by pupils from their *shaykhs*. As the *amālī* were usually dictated at a number of successive sessions (*majālis*, sing. *majlis*) they have sometimes been also referred to as *majālis*. Several such works have come down from prominent scholars like Ibn Bābawayh, al-Mufīd, al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā and Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭūsī. The traditions in these works are not grouped according to specific themes but relate to different historical, doctrinal and legal issues.

Another useful source is the *ʿUmdat al-ṭālib*, a Shīʿī genealogical work by Aḥmad b. ʿAlī, known as Ibn ʿInaba (d. 825/1422), who is well informed about the early Shīʿī movements. Important material for the early period is also preserved in the

voluminous works of some later Shī'ī writers. Among them may be mentioned the *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib* of Ibn Shahrāshūb (d. 588/1192). A prolific writer who has written extensively on *ḥadīth*, theology and history is Ḥasan b. Yūsuf b. al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī (d. 726/1325). But perhaps the most famous and useful source is the encyclopaedic work, *Biḥār al-anwār* by Muḥammad Bāqir b. Muḥammad Taqī al-Majlisī (d. 1110/1700). Using a vast variety of Shī'ī sources which are scrupulously mentioned, al-Majlisī's work provides valuable information on early Shī'ī history, doctrine and tradition.

Among Ismaili sources, one of the earliest works that has been particularly useful in this study is the *Kitāb al-zīna* of Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 322/933).[12] The section of interest here is the seventh dealing with Muslim schools and sects which has been edited by an Iraqi scholar, al-Sāmarrā'ī, and published in the appendix of his book *al-Ghulūww wa al-firaq al-ghāliyya fī al-haḍārat al-islāmiyya*. Another early Ismaili writer whose various works have been extensively used is al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān (d. 363/973), a versatile scholar who seems to have been equally at ease writing history, theology or law. Among his various works is the *Sharḥ al-akhbār* which has recently been published in three volumes.[13] A further work of al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān which is in manuscript, and which has proved useful, is the *Manāqib li ahl al-bayt wa al-mathālib Banī Umayya*. Use has also been made of al-Nu'mān's *Kitāb al-īḍāḥ*, one of the earliest and most comprehensive works on *fiqh* of which only a portion, on *ṣalāt*, has survived;[14] his *Da'ā'im al-Islām* and its corresponding esoteric works, *Ta'wīl al-da'ā'im* and the *Asās al-ta'wīl*, both of which have been edited; the *Kitāb al-himma fī ādāb atbā' al-a'imma* which deals primarily with the subject of the imamate and *al-Urjūza al-mukhtāra*,[15] in which al-Nu'mān explains the idea of the imamate and other related aspects in a poem. Other works of al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān on *fiqh*, include *al-Urjūza al-muntakhaba*, *Mukhtaṣar al-īḍāḥ*, *Kitāb al-iqtiṣār*, *Kitāb al-yanbū'*, *Mukhtaṣar al-āthār* and *Ikhtilāf uṣūl al-madhāhib*.[16]

The earliest esoteric work to contain some useful information is the *Asrār al-nuṭaqā'* of Ja'far b. Manṣūr al-Yaman, a

contemporary of al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān. The *Asrār* is closely connected with another work by this author, the *Sarāʾir al-nuṭaqāʾ*, and appears to be a revised and amplified version of the latter. Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr al-Yaman has written a number of other works and is considered to be one of the leading exponents of *taʾwīl*. Many of his works, such as the *Kitāb al-farāʾiḍ wa ḥudūd al-dīn*, which contains esoteric interpretations of the Qurʾānic chapters *Yūsuf*, *Kahf* and *Nūr*, are still in manuscript form. Others, such as the *Kitāb al-kashf* are edited. An interesting work that is ascribed to him is the *Kitāb al-fatarāt wa al-qirānāt*.[17] This work, which deals with the prophecies and occult sciences believed to have been revealed by ʿAlī, is also known as the *Kitāb al-jafr* of Mawlānā ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib.[18] Another significant work of Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr is the *Shawāhid wa al-bayān*, also unpublished, which discusses Qurʾānic verses referring to ʿAlī and his successors.

Another work that has been used in this study is the *Risāla fī al-imāma* by Abū al-Fawāris Aḥmad b. Yaʿqūb (d. 413/1022).[19] This consists of answers given to various questions put to him concerning the imamate. Al-Muʾayyad fī al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 470/1077) was yet another learned Ismaili scholar whose many works are mostly in manuscript. The exceptions are *Sīra al-Muʾayyad* and the *Dīwān al-Muʾayyad*, both of which have been edited by M. Kāmil Ḥusayn. The first two volumes of his great work, *al-Majālis al-Muʾayyadiyya*, consisting of 800 *majālis* in eight volumes are found in M. Ḥārithī, *Majmūʿ al-tarbiya* while some of his *majālis* are summarised by Muscati and Moulvi in their *Life and Lectures of al-Muʾayyad*.

A work of a slightly later scholar that has also been used in this study is the *ʿUyūn al-akhbār* of Idrīs ʿImād al-Dīn (d. 872/1467) which is in seven volumes. The volume most relevant for this study is the fourth, which has been edited by Muṣṭafā Ghālib. It consists of biographies of the imams after ʿAlī until the last imam of the *dawr al-satr* (period of concealment). Idrīs has written many other works besides the *ʿUyūn*, famous among which is the *Zahr al-maʿānī*, his work on *ḥaqāʾiq* (inner truths).

One of the major problems of early Arabic and Islamic historiography revolves around the historicity of sources. As is

known, most of these sources depended on a body of knowledge known as *ḥadīth* literature, both Sunnī and Shīʿī. In time, next to the Qurʾān, *ḥadīth* came to be regarded as the most important body of Islamic textual material responsible for the development of religious and ethical thought in Islam. The literature itself is unusually abundant and undoubtedly it is difficult to authenticate all that has been handed down to us. In the case of al-Bāqir, even if certain traditions from him are spurious, we should not discard his entire tradition as fictitious. The approach employed in this study is that of judicious use rather than outright rejection. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that these traditions represent not only the beliefs of the Muslims of the time but they constitute the mirror in which the Shīʿī consciousness revealed its own aspirations.

CHAPTER TWO

The Idea of the Imamate Before al-Bāqir

In general, the Arabic word *imām* means 'leader' or 'master' and often refers to a leader of a community or an authority in a field of scholarship. In Islamic law and theology, it is technically applied to the legitimate successor or the supreme leader of the Muslim community; it is also applicable to the leader of the ritual prayer (*ṣalāt*). Historically, the question of leadership, imamate, has aroused and elicited various responses within Muslim society. The Sunnīs have supported the actual holder of power and regarded the historical caliphate as legitimate; for them, the imam is thus identical with the ruling caliph. The Shīʿa, on the other hand, uphold a privileged position for the family of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*) and emphasise the principle of legitimacy of the imam within that family.

The family of the Prophet, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is accorded an elevated position in the Qur'ān, above all other believers. The Qur'ān also relates the importance of the families of the past prophets who implored God to grant them the assistance of their family members, praying for divine favour for their kin and offspring.[1] In the Qur'ān, therefore, the heirs of the prophets, in respect to kingship (*mulk*), rule (*ḥukm*), wisdom (*ḥikma*), the book and the imamate, are their descendants and close kin. Madelung argues

that Muḥammad could not have seen his own succession other than in the light of the Qur'ānic succession of the previous prophets.[2] Watt, on the other hand, maintains that Abū Bakr was the obvious choice for a successor since he was not only the most significant of Muḥammad's early converts, but also his leading lieutenant and trusted counsellor.[3] But succession in a tribal society was normally based on dynastic kinship and to choose a close advisor as a successor would have been considered highly irregular.

Early Disputes about the Leadership of the Community

The early disputes in the Muslim community arose over the nature of the 'supreme leadership' or the imamate. Historical sources indicate that immediately after the Prophet's death in Medina, there was a dispute over his succession. The Anṣār met at the *saqīfa* (assembly hall) in Medina to decide the critical question of leadership. The Medinans proposed choosing one leader from the Anṣār (indigenous Medinans) and another from the Muhājirūn (Meccan immigrants). The election that ended in favour of Abū Bakr was not as simple as is generally believed. Several sources suggest the existence of at least a few people who felt that 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib had a valid claim to the succession. As early as the *saqīfa* meeting, there were some who objected to giving allegiance to Abū Bakr saying that they would not pledge *bay'a* to anyone but 'Alī.[4] Why 'Alī, the sources do not mention, and they also fail to explain why the Anṣār were willing to give up their own candidate, Sa'd b. Ubāda, for a compromise in favour of 'Alī who was a *muhājir* from the Quraysh. What is important from a historical point of view is that reports which put forward such sentiments about 'Alī and his family are contained in the earliest Islamic materials.[5]

Some reports maintain that the voices raised in support of 'Alī did not subside after the decision taken in favour of Abū Bakr at the *saqīfa*.[6] For, when the group returned to the mosque, there arose an unusual tumult in the gathering. It is believed that at this point 'Alī and some of his supporters, both from

the Anṣār and the Muhājirūn, gathered at Fāṭima's house to ponder the matter.[7] But before any decision could be reached, they were summoned to the mosque to pay homage.[8] It must be pointed out, however, that the collection of traditions in the sources renders it difficult to determine when exactly this demand for homage was made; whether it was immediately after they came to the mosque from the *saqīfa*, or whether it was after the burial ceremony of the Prophet the next day, when Abū Bakr received the allegiance of the general public.

According to some reports,[9] 'Alī and his supporters refused to comply with the summons to attend the mosque, at which point 'Umar is believed to have advised Abū Bakr to go in person to investigate his absence. According to the sources,[10] the two men marched to 'Alī's house with an armed party, surrounded it and threatened to set it on fire if 'Alī and his supporters would not offer allegiance. 'Alī, it is believed, came out protesting about his rights and refused to give in to their demands. The scene soon became violent[11] and 'Umar tried to push through the gate. However, at that moment Fāṭima is believed to have appeared suddenly, exclaiming: 'Before God, I say, either you get out of here at once, or with my hair dishevelled I will make my appeal to God.' At this, Abū Bakr's group left the place, apparently without securing 'Alī's allegiance.[12]

Many of the Anṣār refused to pledge allegiance at the *saqīfa* to Abū Bakr but gradually became reconciled to the circumstances.[13] There are several verses by the poet Ḥassān b. Thābit attacking Abū Bakr and the Quraysh openly.[14] As for 'Alī himself, the traditions from early times present a version of events which suggest that he opposed the pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr and felt that it should have gone to him. There is even a degree of unanimity, albeit not total, that 'Alī delayed the pledge of allegiance until after Fāṭima's death, although some later Shī'ī scholars deny that he ever made the pledge.[15] Thus the evidence for his pledge in the preserved traditions is for a delayed rather than an immediate acceptance.[16]

When 'Alī accompanied Fāṭima to ask Abū Bakr for her inheritance,[17] Abū Bakr retorted that the Prophet had said, 'I

am of the company of the prophets, we will not have people inherit from us what we have left of money dedicated to pious purposes.' Fāṭima replied, 'Is it then that you will be heir to your father and that I will not be heir to my father, for surely the Messenger of Allāh said "A man will protect his child?"'[18] The dispute over this problem of inheritance reflects the dispute over succession. If the Prophet could leave property to heirs, then there might be an argument for hereditary succession which Abū Bakr was trying to deny. Abū Bakr nevertheless managed to solve the problem of the *ahl al-bayt* without losing face. The conflict that ensued between the Prophet's family (Banū Hāshim) and his tribe (Quraysh) for the leadership of the Muslim community is described by Madelung who offers a convincing argument for 'Alī's claim to legitimate succession.[19]

'Alī, as is known, played a passive role in political affairs during the reign of the first two caliphs. Given his extremely active participation in the affairs of the community during the Prophet's time this is rather revealing. It is, however, difficult to determine whether his abstention was from choice or whether he was actively excluded from political affairs. The first interpretation would tend to suggest he was discomfited by the course of events, while the second implies that he was regarded as a possible threat. In this connection, there is a report that 'Alī declined Abū Sufyān's offer to fight for his rights, for in his view that would have meant destroying Islam.[20]

On his deathbed, Abū Bakr, having consulted 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf and 'Uthmān, nominated 'Umar as the next caliph[21] completely ignoring 'Alī in consultation as well as in nomination. This nomination was extremely disturbing to some prominent companions of the Prophet and, according to a report in al-Ṭabarī,[22] Ṭalḥa personally complained about it to Abū Bakr. However, Abū Bakr was adamant and made sure that there was a written record of his choice. The fact that Abū Bakr felt it necessary to appoint 'Umar and put his decision in writing is rather revealing considering that, in the view of these companions, the Prophet had neither appointed anyone nor, as the sources suggest, was he allowed by 'Umar himself to put

it in writing.[23]

There are also indications in the sources that, during the period of his caliphate, 'Alī had disagreements with 'Umar. Of special significance is the question of the *dīwān* (stipend-roll or registry) which involved many administrative and financial matters. 'Alī is said to have recommended the distribution of the entire revenue, a policy which 'Umar did not accept.[24]

Al-Ṭabarī records an interesting dialogue between 'Umar and Ibn 'Abbās which suggests 'Umar's attitude towards the Banū Hāshim, and especially 'Alī. According to this, 'Umar is believed to have asked Ibn 'Abbās why 'Alī did not cooperate with them, and why the Quraysh did not support his family. When Ibn 'Abbās replied that he did not know the reason, 'Umar retorted, 'it is because the Quraysh do not want both the prophethood and the caliphate to be combined in your house, for that would make you rejoice and feel arrogant.'[25] According to another tradition, 'Umar asked Ibn Abbās to provide poems to prove his point, whereupon the latter quoted verses from Zuhayr b. Abī Sulma, a popular pre-Islamic poet.[26] After an exchange of words between Ibn 'Abbās and 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbās said that if the Quraysh had made the same choice for themselves as God had made for them, then the right would have been theirs. 'Umar himself regarded the outcome of the *saqīfa* to be a *falta* – a sudden, abrupt event without deliberation. Moreover, the *saqīfa* meeting ended in a very turbulent and undignified manner resulting in the eventual exile and death of the Khazrajī leader, Sa'd b. 'Ubāda.

In nominating his own successor, 'Umar restricted the decision to six people – 'Uthmān, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf, Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās, 'Alī, Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr – with his own son 'Abd Allāh in the capacity of an advisor.[27] The reports maintain that the six men were not given a choice, but were rather pressurised into participating in the decision-making body.[28] According to the *Nahj al-balāgha*, 'Alī thought that the very selection of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf to have the casting vote ensured that the succession would not go to him. [29] The selection was also, according to 'Alī, a virtual guarantee of the

nomination of 'Uthmān who was 'Abd al-Raḥmān's old friend and brother-in-law, whereas Sa'd b. Abī Waqqās, as 'Abd al-Raḥmān's cousin, was bound to support him.[30] Traditions in al-Balādhurī[31] and al-Ṭabarī[32] maintain that 'Alī protested about the matter, but to no avail.

An interesting report recorded by al-Ṭabarī states that 'Alī was asked in the *shūrā* if he would rule according to the *Kitāb Allāh*, the *sunna* of the Prophet as well as the *sīra* of the first two caliphs. Some traditions maintain that 'Alī declined to follow the second condition. Others maintain that he replied, 'I hope to do that and act to the best of my knowledge and ability.'[33] This reply was regarded as evasive by those present. When 'Uthmān was asked the same question he accepted the conditions and was declared caliph by 'Abd al-Raḥmān.[34] Some sources suggest that 'Uthmān's selection did not pass without serious protest from 'Alī's ardent supporters. Thus 'Ammār b. Yāsir said:

> O people, God has made us most honourable through this Prophet and distinguished us through his religion, but you are turning away from the people of the house (*ahl al-bayt*) of your Prophet.[35]

Miqdād's protest in favour of 'Alī was even stronger than that of 'Ammār:

> It is very hard to see how the people are paying their respect to the members of the family (*ahl al-bayt*) of their Prophet after him. It is indeed shocking to see that the Quraysh have forsaken and by-passed the man who is the best among them.

Then someone asked Miqdād, who were the *ahl al-bayt* and who was that man among them? Miqdād replied that 'the *ahl al-bayt* are the Banū 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and the man is 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.'[36]

These statements demonstrate that support for 'Alī's claim had not died down, although it may have subsided for a while. With the coming of 'Uthmān discontent soared. His kinsmen

occupied governorships and other leading posts and proceeded to accumulate wealth. In addition to his first partisans, many others now began to show support for 'Alī. According to al-Ya'qūbī, one of 'Alī's ardent supporters, Abū Dharr al-Ghiffārī began to protest violently against 'Uthmān's regime, delivering speeches in 'Alī's favour at the mosque of Medina in which he referred to 'Alī as the *waṣī* of the Prophet and the *wārith* of his knowledge. He also invited the people, whom he called the 'confused community' (*al-umma al-mutaḥayyira*), to give preference to the one to whom God had given preference and to set aside those whom God had set aside.[37]

There are clear indications that 'Uthmān's attitude towards Abū Dharr was hostile which, if such speeches were indeed made, is hardly surprising. All sources agree that 'Uthmān sent him away to Syria where he continued his campaign until Mu'āwiya complained about his dangerous activities. 'Uthmān then ordered him to be bound to a wooden camel saddle and sent to Medina under escort. He was eventually exiled to al-Rabadha, his birth place, where he died.[38]

'Alī's own attitude, as expressed in his speeches and letters, was complex. He asserted that, on the basis of his close kinship and association with the Prophet, as well as his outstanding merits in the cause of Islam, he personally had a better right to the succession. The *ḥadīth* of Ghadīr Khumm was first given publicity by 'Alī himself when he invited those companions who had heard the Prophet's statements there to testify to it in front of the mosque of Kūfa. The most basic beliefs of the Shī'a thus go back to 'Alī himself.[39]

Meanwhile, the seething dissatisfaction in the empire eventually exploded into a revolt that ended in 'Uthmān's assassination.[40] Amidst all the chaos and confusion, 'Alī succeeded to the caliphate, inheriting all the problems surrounding it, now compounded by the murder of 'Uthmān. He was acclaimed and hailed by many of his supporters. Indeed, from what can be gathered from al-Ya'qūbī, the sentiments expressed on the occasion show that a number of people were prepared to pay glowing tribute to 'Alī, indicating

that he had outstanding merits and superior claims to the caliphate. Similar sentiments were echoed by another Anṣāri, Khuzayma b. Thābit, and by Ṣa'ṣa'a b. Ṣawhān.[41] The pledge offered by Mālik b. al-Ḥārith al-Ashtar in al-Ya'qūbī appears, however, to be unique in that he declared 'Alī as the *waṣī al-awṣiyā'* and *wārith 'ilm al-anbiyā'*.[42] This shows that there was a group whose attitude to 'Alī was different from the rest of the community.

The events that followed 'Alī's acclamation, such as the rebellions of Ṭalḥa, Zubayr and 'Ā'isha, that of Mu'āwiya, and the secession of the Khārijīs, are too well known to need elaboration. However, it is significant to note that in the battles that were fought, especially at al-Jamal and Ṣiffīn, expressions such as *waṣī* were used in reference to 'Alī.[43] The attitude of the poet Abū al-Aswad al-Du'alī (who fought at 'Alī's side at Ṣiffīn) is already distinctly religious when he says:

> When I looked into the face of Abū al-Ḥusayn, I saw the full moon which filled the spectators with reverent wonder. The Quraysh now know, wherever they may be, that thou art their noblest in merit and religion.[44]

If these reports are genuine statements of words spoken about 'Alī by these men, then they would indicate that, as early as 'Alī's time, these ideas were already part of what might be termed the Shī'ī tradition. Similar statements were attributed to the controversial figure of 'Abd Allāh b. Saba',[45] who is said to have declared during 'Uthmān's reign that every Prophet had a *waṣī* and that 'Alī was the *waṣī* of Muḥammad and had been designated as such by him. He is also believed to have taught that the divine spirit which dwells in every Prophet, passing successively from one to another, was transferred from Muḥammad to 'Alī, who bequeathed it to his descendants who succeeded him in the imamate.[46] According to Nawbakhtī,[47] Ibn Saba' also preached that the first three caliphs and their followers should be cursed. He was also the first to preach the doctrine of *waqf*, for he refused to recognise the death of 'Alī.

Such ideas suggest that there was a group which viewed ʿAlī's succession as a matter of divine right. This group was not necessarily known by any particular name at the time, although those who supported ʿAlī in the Battle of the Camel and at Ṣiffīn, whether religiously or politically, were all referred to as Shīʿat ʿAlī[48] or al-ʿAlawiyya as opposed to Shīʿat ʿUthmān, or more popularly, al-ʿUthmāniyya.

Al-Ḥusayn and Karbala

When ʿAlī was assassinated by a Khārijī, his son al-Ḥasan was acclaimed as caliph by the Kūfans. Muʿāwiya not only denounced the appointment both in speeches and letters, but also sent agents and spies to arouse people against al-Ḥasan. The sources maintain that Muʿāwiya was able to bribe al-Ḥasan's commanders, and this eventually led to his abdication.[49] Al-Ḥasan then left Kūfa and settled in Medina where one of his wives, Jaʿda bint al-Ashʿath, is said to have been bribed by Muʿāwiya to poison him.[50] This was, apparently, necessary in order to achieve Yazīd's succession which could not have materialised on account of the treaty that existed between Muʿāwiya and al-Ḥasan.

Meanwhile, a number of Kūfans gathered in the house of Sulaymān b. Ṣurad[51] and wrote to al-Ḥusayn urging him to rise against Muʿāwiya, but he refused to respond, honouring his brother's treaty. Some were perturbed at al-Ḥasan's abdication, including Ḥujr b. ʿAdī al-Kindī, who was untiring in his protest against Muʿāwiya and against his insistent order that ʿAlī should be officially cursed from the pulpits. Ḥujr and some of his associates revolted against Muʿāwiya and his governor Ziyād b. Abīhi.[52] Ziyād tried all possible means to dissuade Ḥujr, including political concessions and material rewards; but when he declined, he and thirteen of his associates were rounded up. Seven of them were freed through the influence of their relatives. However, Ḥujr and six others were told that they must publicly curse and denounce ʿAlī and bear witness on behalf of ʿUthmān or suffer death by decapitation.[53] They refused to

comply and were executed. The fact that Ḥujr and his associates paid with their lives because of their sentiments for 'Alī is significant. When Mu'āwiya died and his son Yazīd came to power in 60/680, al-Ḥusayn and 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr refused to pledge allegiance. The numerous messages and letters from the people of Kūfa and Baṣra declaring that they had no imam other than al-Ḥusayn encouraged him to make an attempt to gain power. He therefore sent his cousin Muslim b. 'Aqīl to investigate the true situation in Kūfa and report to him.

Al-Ḥusayn's response to the letters and messages of the people of Kūfa and Baṣra is revealing because it defines the way he believed an imam should conduct himself in his office and therefore helps us to understand the early concept of the imamate:

> In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, from al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī to the leaders of the believers (*mu'minīn*) and the Muslims (*muslimīn*). Hāni' and Sa'īd have brought me your letters; they are the last two of your messengers who have come to me. I have understood everything that you have described and mentioned. The statement of most of you is: 'There is no imam over us. Come, God may unite us in guidance and truth through you.' I am sending you my brother, Muslim b. 'Aqīl, who is my cousin and the trustworthy representative from my family (*ahl*). I have instructed him to write to me about your circumstances, situation and views. If he writes to me that the opinion of your leaders and of the men of wisdom and merit among you is united in the same way as the messengers who have come to me have described, and as I have read in your letters, I will come to you speedily, God willing, for, by my life, what is the imam except one who acts according to the Book, one who upholds justice, one who professes the truth, and one who dedicates himself to [the essence of] God? Peace be with you.[34]

Imam al-Ḥusayn's letter to the people of Baṣra reads:

> God gave preference to Muḥammad before all His creatures. He graced him with prophethood and chose him for His message. After he had warned His servants and informed them of what he had been sent with, God took him to Himself. We are his family (*ahl*), those who possess his authority (*awliyā'*), those who have been made his trustees (*awṣiyā'*) and his inheritors (*wurathā'*); we are those who have more right to his position among the people than anyone else. People selfishly claimed our exclusive right to that. Yet we consented [to what they did] since we hated disunion and desired the well-being [of the community]. However, we know that we have greater claim to that right, which was our entitlement, than those who have seized it. They have done well, set many things right, and sought truth. May God have mercy on them and forgive us and them. I have sent my messenger to you with this letter. I summon you to the Book of God, the Sunna of His Prophet. Indeed the Sunna has [almost] been killed while innovation has been given life. If you hear my words and obey my commands, I will guide you along the path of righteousness. Peace and the mercy of God be with you.[55]

Several points emerge from the content of these letters. Firstly, al-Ḥusayn does not use the word Shī'a, but instead refers to '*mu'minīn*' and '*muslimīn*'. This terminology is also significant because he appears to be making a distinction between 'those who have faith' (*mu'minīn*) and 'those who have only submitted' (*muslimīn*). By the *mu'minīn* he probably means his committed followers and it is worth noting that he addresses the *mu'minīn* first and then the *muslimīn*. Another point to observe is that the Kūfans invited al-Ḥusayn to lead them as they had no imam to guide them. Finally, in the last two lines of the first letter al-Ḥusayn describes the way an imam should conduct himself: 'what is the imam except one who acts according to the Book, one who upholds justice, one who professes the truth, and one who dedicates himself to [the essence of] God? Peace be with you.'[56]

In his letter to the Baṣrans, al-Ḥusayn is more specific on the question of his family's right to succession. He is also

surprisingly open about telling them that his own people (the extended family of Quraysh) preferred themselves over his family and himself. He added that, even though they were more entitled to the leadership, being the Prophet's *ahl* and *awliyā'*, his *awṣiya'* and *wurathā'*, they remained silent in order to avoid dissension.[57]

Thus al-Ḥusayn was already defining the concept of the imamate, although in an embryonic form, to those who had extended an invitation to him. However, before he reached 'Irāq, the enthusiasm for taking up arms on his behalf in Kūfa had already begun to dwindle on account of the severe measures taken by the city's governor. Al-Ḥusayn, together with the small group who accompanied him, met his death at Karbala without the promised assistance of the Kūfans.[58]

The Aftermath of Karbala

Al-Ḥusayn's death kindled a new movement in Kūfa. Many people expressed remorse for their apathy. They wanted to seek atonement by throwing themselves into the struggle to obtain vengeance for his blood. They chose Sulaymān b. Ṣurad al-Khuzā'ī as their leader and, calling themselves the Tawwābūn (penitents), they set to work in secret.[59]

By contrast, the traumatic experience of Karbala caused al-Ḥusayn's son, 'Alī, Zayn al-'Ābidīn, to avoid political involvement as far as possible. When the Medinans rebelled against Yazīd in the year 63/683, Zayn al-'Ābidīn left the city for his estate on its outskirts.[60] Later, when Yazīd's army led by Muslim b. 'Uqba defeated the Medinans in the Battle of Harra, and sacked and looted the city, Zayn al-'Ābidīn and his family were left unmolested. Moreover, there is evidence that he was exempted from giving allegiance to Yazīd while the other inhabitants of Medina were obliged to do so.[61]

By this time, the Tawwābūn, who had begun their activities secretly in Kūfa, had gathered support and were looking for a favourable opportunity for action. Yazīd's death provided the opening they sought. At this stage, al-Mukhtār b. Abī 'Ubayd

al-Thaqafī, who had been in exile for his participation in the revolt in Kūfa under Muslim b. 'Aqīl, appeared in Kūfa and tried to persuade the Tawwābūn to join him so that there would be a better chance of success. But they refused and went ahead with their plans to meet at Nukhayla, a suburb of Kūfa, in 65/684. Only a quarter of those expected turned up. Full of guilt, they prayed for the first three days and then proceeded to Karbala making vows at the tomb of al-Ḥusayn. The Tawwābūn finally reached 'Ayn al-Warda and zealously fought the Syrians who far outnumbered them. Most were killed; yet their movement was significant because it was not only a purely religious movement but also a purely Arab movement, for the *mawālī*, the non-Arab Muslims, had not yet entered the scene.[62]

Meanwhile, the Ḥijāz and Syria were in a state of utter chaos and confusion. In Syria, Mu'āwiya II, who had succeeded his father Yazīd as caliph, had died six months later and Marwān b. al-Ḥakam had managed to become the new caliph. In the Ḥijāz, 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr had already put forward his claims to the caliphate. In this struggle for the caliphate, Zayn al-'Ābidīn maintained his attitude of non-involvement. Kūfa, however, still had many Shī'a who wanted to do something, despite the failure of the Tawwābūn. These elements found a willing leader in Mukhtār who, in a letter to the remnants of the Tawwābūn, said he would base his policy on 'the Book of God, the *sunna* of the Prophet, vengeance for "the family", defence of the weak and *jihād* against the evil doers.'[63]

Some sources suggest[64] that al-Mukhtār may have initially offered to be an emissary for Zayn al-'Ābidīn. When the latter refused, al-Mukhtār began to excite Shī'ī feelings in the name of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya,[65] claiming that he had been entrusted to avenge the blood that had been shed and put an end to injustice. He took up the task with resolution, thus drawing the sympathy of the *mawālī*, the non-Arab converts to Islam who were given protection by the Arab tribes – a second-class status which they resented and which they believed deprived them of the rights they could claim as Muslims. The support of the Mawālī, however, alienated al-Mukhtār from those who

proclaimed the supremacy of the Arabs.

In the meantime, the Umayyad caliph Marwān was succeeded by his son 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān who began to strengthen his position. By this time, al-Mukhtār had mobilised his forces and in 66/686–7 he seized Kūfa. Al-Mukhtār's army hunted down the murderers of al-Ḥusayn, decapitating 'Ubayd Allāh. Even though the movement was not in Zayn al-'Ābidīn's name, al-Mukhtār sent the head of 'Ubayd Allāh, who was responsible for al-Ḥusayn's murder, to him. However, after some time, al-Mukhtār's army became divided and was subdued in stages by Muṣ'āb, the brother of 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr. Al-Mukhtār himself struggled for a while but later lost control and was eventually defeated and killed in 67–8/687–8.[66]

Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya is, for his own part, believed to have adopted an equivocal attitude towards al-Mukhtār since he was represented at the pilgrimage of 71/638 by a personal flag. When he was addressed by the term *mahdī*, he responded by asking people to address him as Muḥammad and Abū al-Qāsim. The fact that he was imprisoned by Ibn al-Zubayr shows that he was a possible threat and therefore a potential candidate. However, while in prison Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya turned to al-Mukhtār for help, demonstrating that his attitude towards al-Mukhtār was not as passive and non-committal as some authors would have us believe.[67]

It is suggested that Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya did in fact have secret designs on the caliphate since he had provisionally abstained from pledging allegiance to either Ibn al-Zubayr or 'Abd al-Malik in the hope that their rivalry might be favourable to him. However, this hope was shattered after the submission of 'Irāq and the fall of Ibn al-Zubayr in 73/692. He was then obliged to give allegiance to 'Abd al-Malik, and in 78/697 he even went to Damascus where he rendered certain services to the caliph. In return, the caliph rewarded him and his family with substantial subventions and also paid off his debts.[68]

The Kaysāniyya

The Kaysāniyya, another Shī'ī tendency, emerged from al-Mukhtār's movement. This is a collective name used by heresiographers for all the sects which evolved from this movement and traced the imamate to Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya and his descendants. Various explanations have been given for this name, but it was most probably derived from Kaysān Abū 'Amra, chief of the guard and leader of the *mawālī* under al-Mukhtār.[69] The name 'Kaysāniyya' was probably at first a pejorative nickname applied by the opponents of the movement in order to discredit it;[70] but it also appears to reflect the significance the movement attached to the *mawlā*[71] element which joined it. The role of Kaysān seems to have been soon forgotten, for the name was also explained as a derivation of the surname Kaysān allegedly given to al-Mukhtār by 'Alī, or from the name of a *mawlā* of 'Alī killed at Ṣiffīn from whom, it was claimed, al-Mukhtār acquired his ideas.[72]

Kaysān is reported to have been more extreme than al-Mukhtār, charging the caliphs preceding 'Alī with infidelity, while al-Mukhtār condemned only 'Alī's opponents in the battles of the Camel and Ṣiffīn. He is also alleged to have asserted that the angel Jibrā'īl transmitted divine revelations to al-Mukhtār, who could hear but not see him. Further, he reportedly claimed that Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya was appointed by 'Alī as his executor (*waṣī*), thus excluding his brothers al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn from the imamate. In Madelung's view,[73] this doctrine was probably formulated later in opposition to Imāmī and Zaydī denials of the rights of Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya. It was, moreover, also contrary to the common view of the Kaysāniyya who upheld the successive imamate of the three sons of 'Alī.

It was presumably after the death of Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya in 81/700 that messianic ideas about him began to spread. Some of his supporters, called the Karībiyya or Kuraybiyya after their leader Abū Karīb (Kurayb) al-Ḍarīr, believed that Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya had not died but was in concealment at Mount

Raḍwā, west of Medina, nourished by springs of water and honey and protected by a lion and a leopard. He would, they believed, reappear as the *mahdī* at the appropriate time and fill the earth with justice as it was now filled with wickedness.[74] Among the people who were involved in this messianism, the name of the poet Kuthayyir (d. 723/1323) is prominent.[75] Another later poet, al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī (723–789/1323–1387), held similar views.[76]

Shī'ī sources, on the other hand, maintain that Abū Karīb and his followers were a group distinct from those who believed that he was hiding in the mountains of Raḍwā.[77] According to these sources, the Kuraybiyya were those who believed that the whereabouts of Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya could not be known and that 'Alī had named him the *mahdī*. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī maintains that, for Abū Karīb, Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya was the immediate successor to 'Alī in the imamate and opposed those who upheld the imamate of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn before him.[78] This, however, was contrary to views expressed by the majority of the Kaysāniyya who upheld the successive imamate of 'Alī's three sons. For the first time among Muslims, messianic ideas had, it seems, made an appearance, though later they came to be held by Shī'ī groups in many forms. The similarity between these and Judaeo-Christian messianic ideas is quite obvious,[79] and there is also a parallel with the ancient pre-Islamic Arabian belief in the return of the hero.[80] Perhaps later, this idea became more elaborate in the belief that the hero would either return (*raj'a*) in the same body or in a different body having the same spirit (*tanāsukh*).

Another group mentioned by Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī followed Ḥayyān al-Sarrāj in maintaining that Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya had died in the Raḍwā mountains and had bequeathed the imamate to his son Abū Hāshim, who he knew would die childless. Still another group believed that Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya had died and that the next imam was his son Abū Hāshim, whom he had appointed as his successor. All these different groups of the Kaysāniyya are characterised by their love for 'Alī and his family and their hatred of the reigning

dynasty. They were distinguished by the fact that they considered their imam, who carried the name and *kunya* of the Prophet, to be the depository of a special knowledge and venerated him accordingly.

According to the Muʿtazilī Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār,[83] after Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya's death some of the Kaysāniyya went over to Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn. This would tend to suggest that, among many of the Shīʿa, support for ʿAlī's family did not yet translate itself into upholding the rights of a specific individual; nor did it necessarily indicate a preference for the descendants of al-Ḥusayn. It could well be that it was in these circumstances that the doctrine of *naṣṣ* (designation) became a significant determinant in the selection of the imam. This doctrine involved the idea of a pre-ordinance, which was given public reality by the formal act of the imam designating his successor. The doctrine is compatible with hereditary succession, but it does not preclude the possibility of the *naṣṣ* moving outside the hereditary chain.

The doctrine of the *naṣṣ* by al-Ḥusayn of his son ʿAlī, Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn helps to confirm his imamate to the exclusion of the sons of al-Ḥasan or any other descendants of ʿAlī. However, at the time, since the concept of the imamate had not been clearly articulated, the doctrine of *naṣṣ* could also work in favour of others who claimed it. It seems that such a claim to *naṣṣ* may have been put forward on behalf of Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya by the various groups mentioned.

CHAPTER THREE

Aspects of al-Bāqir's Life and Career

Al-Bāqir had a specially prestigious genealogy in that both his maternal and paternal grandfathers, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, were the prophet's grandsons.[1] His full name was Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and his *kunya* was Abū Ja'far. His mother was Fāṭima Umm 'Abd Allāh, a daughter of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī. He was born about 57/677[2] in Medina, around the time when Mu'āwiya was trying to secure the oath of allegiance for his son and future successor Yazīd.[3] While he was still a mere child, his family was afflicted by the tragedy of Karbala. According to al-Ya'qūbī,[4] al-Bāqir was actually present at Karbala. His youth witnessed the struggle for power involving the Umayyads, 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr and the various Shī'ī groups, while at the same time he saw his father remaining aloof from all political activity.

Al-Bāqir's *Laqab* and Succession

It is difficult to determine when al-Bāqir acquired his *laqab* or epithet, which is a shortened form of *bāqir al-'ilm*, 'he who splits open knowledge'. It is equally difficult to say whether al-Bāqir was known by this *laqab* in his lifetime, or whether he acquired it after his death. The earliest evidence we have of its use is in the work of a third-century writer, Zubayr b. Bakkār (d.c. 256/870), who is mentioned by both al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān[5] and Ibn

Ḥajar.[6] According to Ibn Khallikān,[7] Muḥammad b. 'Alī received the epithet 'al-Bāqir' because he collected an ample fund of knowledge, but he does not specify when and from whom he received this appellation. Al-Ya'qūbī[8] mentions that he was called 'Bāqir al-'Ilm' because he 'split open knowledge'. The *Lisān al-'Arab* also states that this was the source of his title because he '"split open knowledge", knew its principles (or roots), discovered its branches and had vast knowledge.'[9]

For the Shī'a in general, 'Bāqir al-'Ilm' was no ordinary title for it was, in their view, given by the Prophet. According to an account recorded in al-Kulaynī,[10] Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh, the oldest surviving companion of the Prophet, would sit in the mosque of the Prophet wearing a black turban and call out: 'Yā bāqir al-'ilm, yā bāqir al-'ilm.' People in Medina thought that Jābir was talking nonsense, but he reassured them that he was acting in this way because he had heard the Prophet say:

> O Jābir! You will meet a man from my family who will have the same name and the same characteristics as mine. He will split open knowledge extensively.

On the question of how Jābir met al-Bāqir, al-Kulaynī's report tells us that one day, as Jābir was walking to and fro in the streets of Medina, he came across the Qur'ān school (*kuttāb*) which al-Bāqir attended as a child.[11] When Jābir saw al-Bāqir, he asked him to come near, which the child did, then to withdraw, which al-Bāqir also did. At this point, Jābir explained, 'Characteristics of the Messenger of Allāh; by Him in whose hands is my soul, O boy, what is your name?' When al-Bāqir replied that he was Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, Jābir approached him, kissed his head and swore by his father and mother that the Messenger of Allāh had recited greetings upon him.

In the account given by al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh was wont to inquire whether there was anyone among al-Ḥusayn's grandsons by the name of Muḥammad. On one occasion, passing by the house of 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, he heard

the maid calling 'Muḥammad'. Jābir, having already lost his sight, enquired of his guide whether the house belonged to 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn. When the guide replied that it was indeed his house, Jābir asked the maid about the 'Muḥammad' she was calling. As soon as she said that the child was Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, Jābir asked her to bring the child to him. When the child was brought to him, Jābir could not stop fussing over him, rubbing his face and kissing his hands and feet. He then said to the child: 'O Son of the Messenger of Allāh, your grandfather has recited his greetings to you.'[14]

When asked about the incident later, Jābir replied that once al-Ḥusayn was playing before the Messenger of Allāh who said:

> O Jābir! You will live until you meet the son of this boy who will be called Muḥammad al-Bāqir, to whom God will give 'the light' and 'the wisdom'. So recite upon him my greetings.

The incident given in al-Ṭabarī[15] produces yet another version of the meeting at the Qur'ān school (*kuttāb*). Jābir, according to al-Ṭabarī, approached al-Bāqir and asked him to uncover his belly. When al-Bāqir complied, Jābir kissed his belly and said that the Messenger of Allāh had asked him to recite his greetings upon him.

There are many difficulties in connection with this episode, not least of which is the existence of several different accounts. The material so far examined shows a divergence of views not only about the title 'Bāqir al-'Ilm', but also how and when Jābir met al-Bāqir. For according to al-Kulaynī, the Prophet is supposed to have said to Jābir that he would meet a man from his family who would have the same name and characteristics as himself and who would 'split open' knowledge extensively. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, on the other hand, maintains that Jābir was told about meeting a son of al-Ḥusayn who had apparently been playing before the Messenger of Allāh, who would be called Muḥammad al-Bāqir whom God would grant 'light' and 'wisdom'. Finally, al-Ṭabarī's account says nothing about the title itself, merely relating that Jābir asked al-Bāqir to uncover his

belly, which he kissed saying that the Messenger had recited his greetings to him. This last aspect, that is the recitation of greetings, is mentioned in all three versions. There seems to be a general agreement among the early sources that the two men had certainly met. There also seems to be a strong indication from widely differing sources that Jābir regarded this particular descendant of the Prophet as someone special in religious terms.

On the question of whether al-Bāqir was called by this name during his lifetime, there is an interesting report preserved by Ibn ʿInaba. The report relates that when Zayd b. ʿAlī, al-Bāqir's half-brother, called on the Umayyad caliph Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik, he asked Zayd about his brother, the cow (*al-baqara*), implying al-Bāqir. Zayd reprimanded Hishām for impetuously opposing the Messenger of Allāh who had named his brother al-Bāqir not al-Baqara. Zayd added that the Messenger would certainly oppose him on the day of resurrection when al-Bāqir would enter Heaven while he (Hishām) would go to hell.[14]

This report is of some significance, for it not only means that al-Bāqir was called by this name during his lifetime but also suggests that the Prophet was associated with its bestowal. The fact that Hishām distorted the title of 'al-Bāqir' to 'al-Baqara' suggests that al-Bāqir could have been known by his *laqab* during his lifetime. Moreover, the fact that Zayd, who was otherwise in opposition to his brother, defended his title on the grounds that it had been given to him by the Prophet, makes it conceivable that as early as the beginning of the second century, and in his own lifetime, al-Bāqir was known as such.

However, whether or not the traditions about his title are authentic, the concept underlying it appears to be a true reflection of al-Bāqir's intellectual reputation, as seen in the light of the traditions that have come down from al-Bāqir in Shīʿī works of all persuasions, Zaydī, Ithnāʿasharī and Ismaili. The Sunnī *ḥadīth* experts invariably consider him as a trustworthy transmitter. Al-Nasāʾī mentions him as one of the early legal scholars (*fuqahāʾ*). Moreover, sporadic traditions from him are also found in major Sunnī works such as Mālik's *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, Ibn

Ḥanbal's *Musnad* and al-Shāfi'ī's *Risāla*. Numerous sayings of his are also narrated in Ṣūfī circles. Al-Ṭabarī not only uses him as an authority in his famous *Ta'rīkh*, but also includes al-Bāqir's traditions in his voluminous *Tafsīr*.

Thus, from various works, Shī'ī and non-Shī'ī, al-Bāqir emerges as a versatile scholar, conversant not only in matters of rites and ritual but also in the exegesis of the Qur'ān, questions pertaining to law, as well as theological topics of both a temporal and spiritual nature. It is also significant to note that, before al-Bāqir's time, Shī'ī learning was limited, while his own era was marked by a sudden profusion of knowledge on various matters. He was thus the first imam of the Shī'a from whom a vast corpus of *ḥadīth* literature has come down. The title, whatever its origins, emphasises the role al-Bāqir played in disseminating knowledge to the general public as well as his place in Shī'ī literature.

According to both Ithnā'asharī and Ismaili sources, after Zayn al-'Ābidīn's death in 94/714 his son al-Bāqir succeeded to the imamate.[15] The traditions in al-Kulaynī would tend to suggest that al-Bāqir received a chest full of the weapons and books of the Messenger of Allāh from his father in the presence of his brothers.[16] These weapons, which symbolised authority, consisted of the sword, the armour, the helmet and the short spear (*'anazah*) of the Prophet. Besides these weapons, traditions in al-Kulaynī maintain that the imams also inherited certain documents that contained important information. In fact the *jāmi'* (compilation) is supposed to contain everything that man may need; every case of law was covered by it, even bloodwit for a scratch. Other documents that the imams are supposed to have possessed are the *jafr* (divination), a leather bag containing knowledge, *al-ṣaḥīfa* (script), and the *muṣḥaf* (book) of Fāṭima. This *muṣḥaf*, it is believed, contained messages that Fāṭima received from an angel after the Prophet's death.[17] It appears that the *jāmi'* certainly did exist. However, it is an open question whether or not this manuscript, or indeed the sword of the Prophet,[18] were in the possession of al-Ḥusayn's descendants.

Al-Bāqir's Rivals

When his father Zayn al-'Ābidīn died in 94/712 or 95/713 and al-Bāqir succeeded him, the Kaysāniyya in its various branches was a prominent group. The most active of its branches appears to have been the Hāshimiyya, which had pronounced itself in favour of Abū Hāshim, the son of Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya, the third son of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. The sources,[19] which record a meeting between Abū Hāshim and al-Bāqir, suggest that Abū Hāshim almost certainly laid claim to the imamate. The story, which may or may not exaggerate the details of the incident, goes as follows: al-Bāqir was sitting in the mosque talking to people around him when suddenly Abū Hāshim approached him with the accusation, 'You [plural] claim the *waṣiyya* of the Messenger of Allāh by deception and lies.' Al-Bāqir replied: 'Say what you like. I am the son of Fāṭima, while you are from a Ḥanafī woman.' On hearing this, some of the audience pounced upon Abū Hāshim and began pelting him with stones and sandals until he was driven out of the mosque. That Abū Hāshim did aspire to the leadership is also evident from the fact that not only did he live in exile,[20] but that he was later poisoned by the Caliph Sulaymān before whom he had made his claims public.

Abū Hāshim's death in 98/817–8 led to new splits in his group. The sources indicate no less than four to five groups claiming succession to him, although he himself had died childless.[21] One of these asserted that Abū Hāshim was the *mahdī* and that he was alive, hiding in the mountains of Raḍwā. Another group claimed that he had appointed his brother 'Alī and that the imamate had continued through 'Alī's son al-Ḥasan, and so on, thus maintaining that it belonged exclusively to the descendants of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya. Others believed that Abū Hāshim had died and that he had appointed 'Abd Allāh b. Mu'āwiya b. 'Abd Allāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib who,[22] being a child, was put in the charge of a certain Ṣāliḥ b. Mudrik who handed over authority when he came of age. A third group, which believed that their own headmen should be their imams,

maintained that he died without appointing a successor. Many, however, believed that Abū Hāshim had appointed Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās as his successor, asserting that, before his death, Abū Hāshim had handed the appointment to Muḥammad's father, 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh, in trust for him until Muḥammad came of age.[23]

Those who traced the imamate through the 'Abbāsid Muḥammad b. 'Alī and his son Ibrāhīm to the 'Abbāsid caliphs became commonly known as Rāwandiyya.[24] Some heresiographers restrict this name to those who claimed that the first imam after the Prophet was his uncle al-'Abbās, and that the imamate continued thereafter among his descendants. Al-Nāshi'[25] also mentions the sects of Bukayriyya[26] and Khidāshiyya within the early 'Abbāsid movement. The former were the followers of Bukayr b. Mahān (d. 127/744–5), the Kūfan *dā'ī* mainly responsible for the organisation of the 'Abbāsid movement in Khurāsān. The Khidāshiyya were named after 'Ammār b. Yazīd, nicknamed Khidāsh, a *dā'ī* active in the area of Nīshāpūr and Merv. When Muḥammad b. 'Alī disowned him on account of doctrinal deviation, his supporters held that he had forfeited the imamate and that it had passed to Khidāsh. Khidāsh was executed in 118/736, but his supporters maintained that he was alive, having been raised to heaven by God.

It seems quite obvious from the many splinter groups within the Shī'ī movement that for most of the early Shī'ī sympathisers it did not matter who the leader was, provided he was a Hāshimid. But the fact that these groups used the idea of *naṣṣ* shows that some conception of succession by designation had existed very early on. Until then, the various claimants were restricted to the 'Alids, but the claim that Abū Hāshim had passed his heritage to the 'Abbāsids, as well as the assertions of Bayān and Abū Manṣur, who claimed *naṣṣ*, shows that the doctrine was widely used. This is the reason why al-Bāqir must have felt the need to lay out a more coherent theory of the imamate with its various requirements.

Al-Bāqir did have an advantage, however, in that he had an especially prestigious genealogy since both his paternal and

maternal grandfathers were, as noted earlier, the Prophet's grandsons.[27] This descent from Fāṭima, which eventually carried great force both among the Ismailis and the Ithnā'asharis, gave al-Bāqir a unique lineage and secured him a sound position among some circles at least.

Al-Bāqir managed, in spite of the various claimants to the imamate, to rally around himself a number of followers. This was in addition to the followers his father had already acquired, especially during the later years of his life. According to al-Balkhī,[28] even 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn had a following of his own, let alone al-Bāqir whose times were more propitious for public teaching than those of his father. There can, therefore, be little doubt that al-Bāqir was recognised as an imam during his lifetime and contrary views expressed by some modern scholars are no longer acceptable.[29] The stories in al-Nawbakhtī[30] of al-Bāqir's difficulties with some of his followers are too life-like to be easily dismissed. The anecdote about a group that followed 'Umar b. Riyāḥ in abandoning al-Bāqir,[31] although damaging in itself, has a positive side in that it demonstrates that al-Bāqir did indeed have a following of his own, among whom some were given to repudiating him as well.[32]

Moreover, the fact that Bayān and Abū Manṣūr both claimed at one point or another to be al-Bāqir's *waṣī* shows that al-Bāqir must have been of some importance as an imam. Furthermore, a number of al-Bāqir's followers like al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-'Ijlī went so far as to claim that he was divine. Although al-Mughīra was repudiated by him, this, together with the other instances mentioned above, is strong evidence that al-Bāqir was indeed recognised as an imam, if only within his own circle.

Additional evidence comes from the fact that, just as the ideas of the Kaysāniyya found poetic expression in the work of poets like Kuthayyir and Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī, there were poets who carried al-Bāqir's family name far and wide. For instance, the poet Farazdaq composed many verses in honour of Zayn al-'Ābidīn. Once, during a pilgrimage, Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik (who was then a prince) was unable to touch the black stone because of the crowd and when he saw people giving way to

Zayn al-'Ābidīn, he asked angrily who he was. In reply, Farazdaq recited an ode in praise of Zayn al-'Ābidīn.[33]

Even more popular than Farazdaq were the verses of Kumayt (d. 126/743) who was a contemporary of al-Bāqir.[34] Kumayt's *Hāshimiyyāt* was made up of verses that could be appreciated by a larger public, unlike those of Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī who offended people by vilifying the first two caliphs.[35] Kumayt did not go beyond the confines of '*tashayyu' ḥasan*' (good inclination towards Shī'ism), and although at times he expressed some fear of the Umayyads,[36] in his view, their power was illegitimate.[37] The Qur'ānic verses which Kumayt cited, such as 'I do not ask you for any reward, only love for my next of kin,' (22:42) were used equally by the 'Abbāsids and later by the Zaydiyya. This is because of the difference in interpretation of the words 'next of kin', which were used to include the whole extended family and the clan of the Prophet.[38]

It is well known that the 'Alids were far from united among themselves and there was a great deal of rivalry between the Ḥasanids and the Ḥusaynids which manifested itself in family disputes, and on some occasions in a struggle for leadership. For example, in Zayn al-'Ābidīn's period, al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan known as al-Muthannā ('the redoubled'), happened to be in charge of the *ṣadaqāt* (alms) from estates left by the Prophet. It is believed that Zayn al-'Ābidīn infuriated al-Muthannā when he challenged his tenure of this office.[39] There is, however, no clear evidence that al-Ḥasan al-Muthannā had designs on the imamate, although he might have considered his older ancestry to have entitled him to 'Alī's spiritual heritage.

After Zayn al-'Ābidīn's death, al-Bāqir resumed the claim over the *ṣadaqāt* with al-Ḥasan al-Muthannā, and, after the latter's death, with his son Zayd b. al-Ḥasan, into whose hands the administration had passed.[40] Yet another son of al-Ḥasan al-Muthannā, 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan al-Maḥḍ found himself in opposition to al-Bāqir for different reasons. Although the actual revolt[41] of al-Maḥḍ's son, al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, took place long after al-Bāqir's death, the propaganda for him had started much earlier; in fact, as early as his birth in 100/718 he was

proclaimed by his father to be the expected *mahdī* on account of a tradition that the *mahdī* had to be called by the same name as the Prophet, that is Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh.

ʿAbd Allāh al-Maḥḍ's effort to spread propaganda in favour of his young son had already met with a certain degree of success during the later years of al-Bāqir's life. The extremist al-Mughīra b. Saʿīd, a former supporter of al-Bāqir, changed his allegiance and with a whole circle of his disciples joined the cause of ʿAbd Allāh al-Maḥḍ and his son.[42] According to Madelung,[43] the fact that al-Mughīra could abandon al-Bāqir for al-Nafs al-Zakiyya meant that the father to son imamate was not widely accepted. That the principle of hereditary imamate was not yet well-known is quite apparent also from the fact that many Shīʿī groups, especially the Hāshimiyya in its various branches, found it acceptable to have five different groups claiming succession and authority from Abū Hāshim, none of which were based on heredity. It was in the light of these circumstances that al-Bāqir, as noted earlier, felt it necessary to lay down his views on succession so that some sort of order was brought into the chaos that had resulted from the variant Shīʿī ideas rampant during the early period of Islam.

Al-Bāqir and Zayd

By the turn of the first Islamic century, al-Bāqir faced even more serious problems, for according to many Shīʿī sources he had to deal with his own half-brother Zayd b. ʿAlī, who propagated a more aggressive and revolutionary policy.

Some scholars suggest that the struggle for leadership between al-Bāqir and Zayd began immediately after the death of Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn,[44] while some believe that Zayd had not intended the imamate for himself and actually favoured his brother's leadership.[45] As far as the first view is concerned, Zayd was only fourteen years old at the time of his father's death in 94/712[46] and it is highly improbable that at that age he would have been able to assert his claims and attract any following. The notion that Zayd actually favoured his brother's leadership

is also untenable in the light of evidence regarding Zayd's own beliefs and conduct. However, in the course of time, Zayd began laying emphasis on the principles of 'ordering good and prohibiting evil', by force if necessary, and accordingly believed that if an imam wanted to be recognised he had to claim his right, sword in hand. Some sources suggest that al-Bāqir and Zayd argued over this issue,[47] for, when the latter asserted that an imam must rise against the oppressors, al-Bāqir remarked: 'So you deny your own father was imam, for he never fought the issue.' If this is true, then, considering Zayd's age, the exchange could not have taken place earlier than the beginning of the second Islamic century.

Zayd is believed to have rejected the Mu'tazilī doctrine of 'the intermediate state' (*manzila bayn al-manzilatayn*), although he did not object to the view that in the quarrels that raged between 'Alī and his opponents, one party was certainly wrong.[48] The Mu'tazilī were not sure which, but, for Zayd, the virtues of 'Alī were of such superior quality that the idea that he could be in the wrong was incomprehensible.[49] However, he agreed that although 'Alī was the best (*al-afḍal*), and therefore the preferred candidate, Abū Bakr and 'Umar had been legally elected leaders. This attitude of his greatly impressed the circle of traditionists and was a major factor in securing their sympathy and support.[50]

Al-Mufīd's[51] view of Zayd's revolt, namely that he was mainly seeking vengeance for al-Ḥusayn's blood and that he really did not intend to take the leadership for himself, is not defensible in the light of facts revealed in other, much earlier sources.[52] All the early writers, such as al-Ṭabarī, Ibn Sa'd, al-Iṣfahānī, and also Ismaili authors like Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī and al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, give the reason for Zayd's revolt as the order for his arrest by the Umayyad caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik. The arrest was on account of money that was lent to Zayd by the deposed governor Khālid b. 'Abd Allāh al-Qasrī and was undoubtedly the immediate cause of his revolt; but it could hardly have been the main reason. It is quite likely that Hishām, having been informed of Zayd's motives and plans, made the debt

a pretext to find out more about his intentions, and later, not having substantial evidence against Zayd, had to release him when he and Dāwūd b. 'Alī (b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās) swore that they did not have the money. Those who supported Zayd b. 'Alī's rebellion against Hishām were all later known as the Zaydiyya.[53] Among the groups who supported Zayd in his rebellion were the Batriyya (Butriyya) and Jārūdiyya.

At the time, one of the main issues dividing the various groups was that of the legitimacy of the leadership of Abū Bakr and of 'Umar. Flowing from this, and obviously from beliefs surrounding the question of whether or not the Prophet had nominated his successor, were the differences over whether or not the early community had erred in making its choice. Following the traditions of the Kūfan Shī'a, the Batriyya[54] upheld the leadership of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and of 'Uthmān during the first six years of his rule on the grounds that 'Alī had pledged allegiance to them. They repudiated 'Uthmān during the last six years of his rule, just as they repudiated all later opponents of 'Alī.[55]

Considering 'Alī the most excellent (*afḍal*) of men, the Batriyya allowed the imamate of the less excellent (*mafḍūl*). They regarded the rebellion (*khurūj*) of anyone among the children of 'Alī as though it were 'ordering the good and forbidding the evil' (*al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahī 'an al-munkar*).[56] They did not observe *al-masḥ 'alā al-khuffayn* – that is the wiping of shoes in ritual ablution – but for them it was permissible to drink *nabīdh* (intoxicating date-wine) and to eat eels (*jirrī*).[57] They also maintained that knowledge was not only confined to the Prophet's family but was also found among the ordinary people, and thus the seeker of knowledge was entitled to receive it from either source. If the seeker was unable to find knowledge from these two groups then, says al-Nawbakhtī,[58] it was permissible to practice *ijtihād* (independent judgement) and *ikhtiyār* (choice) as well as advocate individual opinions (*ārā'*).

The Batriyya thus regarded the whole tradition of the community as a valid source of law. In the event of any gaps in this

tradition they were to exercise *ijtihād*. Their attitude on this score was based on their thesis that the early community of the Prophet's followers had not fallen into error when they had chosen Abū Bakr and 'Umar in place of 'Alī as imam. In their judgment, says al-Nawbakhtī,[59] the Muslims were right to pay homage to them since 'Alī himself had paid them homage. They advocated the view that the imam should be determined by a *shūrā* (consultation) of the best of the community, who would choose the most excellent (*al-afḍal*). However, they maintained that the choice of the less excellent (*al-mafḍūl*) was permissible when it could prevent discord and chaos. It must be remembered, however, that the assertion of this right for the *shūrā* did not undermine their unqualified preference for 'Alī.[60]

This strong emphasis on 'Alī's priority was especially prevalent in 'Irāq, particularly in Kūfa, although those who held this view did not constitute a united faction. According to al-Nawbakhtī,[61] these were the original Batriyya. It was from among them that another group emerged with views similar to those expressed earlier, as well as with the standpoint that the imamate belonged by right to any descendant of 'Alī when he took the field.[62] This group of Batriyya supported the cause of Zayd b. 'Alī when he rose in rebellion against the Umayyad Caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik in the year 122/739.

Another group that also supported Zayd's cause, but had different views, were the Jārūdiyya, the followers of Abū al-Jārūd, Ziyād b. Mundhir al-'Abdī.[63] The Jārūdiyya were originally supporters of al-Bāqir, Abū al-Jārūd being a prominent transmitter of his traditions.[64] In al-Nawbakhtī's opinion, even the followers of Abū Khālid al-Wāsiṭī and Fuḍayl b. al-Zubayr al-Rassān, two other transmitters of al-Bāqir, were among the Jārūdiyya. He calls them Surḥūbiyya, as in his view Abū al-Jārūd's title 'Surḥūb', which is said to designate 'a blind devil dwelling in the sea', had been given to him by al-Bāqir.[65]

The Jārūdiyya did not recognise Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān in the capacity of imams. They declared that the Prophet had appointed 'Alī as his *waṣī* and therefore as the legitimate

imam in his place. According to Madelung,[66] in Zaydī sources there is in general a discernible hesitation over characterising the first three caliphs as heretics and over cursing them. From Abū Mikhnaf's account,[67] it was Zayd's outright refusal to curse Abū Bakr and 'Umar which gave the Kūfans the reason or the pretext for deserting him.

Adopting the views of al-Bāqir's school, the Jārūdiyya rejected the imamate of the first three caliphs. Writers such as al-Ash'arī[68] and Sa'd b. 'Abd Allāh[69] maintain that they upheld the nomination of 'Alī by the Prophet, although al-Nawbakhtī does not explicitly say so. According to al-Shahrastānī,[70] they held that the Prophet nominated 'Alī 'by a description (of his qualities) without the mention of his name (*bi al-waṣf dūna tasmīya*)'.[71] In Zaydī literature[72] his nomination was made in a manner that the believers could understand, not directly and of necessity, but merely by inference. Later this thesis of 'obscure nomination' (*naṣṣ khafī, ghayr jalī*) was universally advocated by the Zaydiyya.[73]

The Jārūdiyya held that the great majority of the companions of the Prophet had gone astray by following Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and, unlike the Batriyya, rejected the tradition of law handed down by them. This critical attitude, which they had undoubtedly adopted from al-Bāqir's school and its attitude towards the great majority of the early community of the Prophet's companions, had a significant effect on legal practice.[74] The Jārūdiyya declared that only the traditions of the Prophet's family were valid. They believed that the imamate belongs to any qualified descendant of al-Ḥasan or al-Ḥusayn who calls for allegiance and rises against the illegitimate rulers. Therefore they relied for their religious knowledge on the descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn as a whole, not merely those recognised as imams.[75] Based on the belief that the imamate only becomes valid through the formal 'call' to allegiance (*da'wa*) and 'rising' (*khurūj*), the Jārūdiyya also maintained that those who did not 'rise' could not be considered as imams.[76]

The restriction of the imamate to the descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn may well have first become the dogma of

the majority of Zaydiyya at the time of the 'Abbāsid conquest. For towards the end of the Umayyad era they were still able to support the revolt of 'Abd Allāh b. Mu'āwiya, the great grandson of 'Alī's brother Ja'far. It is difficult to determine whether the authoritative leaders of the schools were prepared to participate in this revolt. However, it must be said that at least until the fourth/tenth century the idea that the Prophet's family should not be limited to the descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn still maintained itself as a Zaydī tendency. The followers called themselves the Ṭālibiyya and venerated 'Abd Allāh b. Mu'āwiya in the same manner as Zayd b. 'Alī. Nabia Abbot[77] maintains that a leader of this group, Ibn 'Uqda, lived until as late as the first half of the 3rd/9th century and, since he has been labelled as a Jārūdī, there seems little doubt that he condemned the leadership of Abū Bakr and 'Umar.[78]

Al-Nawbakhtī's account of Jārūdiyya theory is somewhat polemical, maintaining that they transmitted only a little from Zayd and 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥasan and that most of their knowledge was derived from al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq. This statement of his follows certain specific doctrines that he attributes to the Jārūdiyya such as 'knowledge grows in their hearts just as rain makes the cultivated land grow'. Earlier, he maintains that they believed that all descendants of the Prophet, young or old, are equal in their knowledge, even in their cradle, and all are therefore equally entitled to the imamate. Here al-Nawbakhtī adds that, despite this, only al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq were known to have transmitted useful knowledge, although a few traditions had come from Zayd b. 'Alī and a scattering from 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan al-Maḥḍ.[79]

These beliefs about knowledge clearly underlie the theory of inspiration (*ilhām*) which al-Jāḥiẓ[80] attributes to the Jārūdiyya. Madelung maintains that this theory probably developed out of their discussion with the followers of al-Bāqir's school, who considered 'knowledge' as an inheritance of their series of imams and who were inclined to charge the Zaydiyya that many of their 'Alid authorities had not transmitted exclusively from their fathers. Madelung further adds that the Zaydiyya,

on the other hand, in opposition to the Imāmī Shī'a, in general allowed their 'Alid authorities to relate from non-'Alid transmitters. Thus, their theory of inspiration is slightly modified in that they ascribe to the 'Alids a guaranteed capacity, especially from God, for the acquisition of knowledge. However, according to Madelung, there is no apparent trace of such a discussion in the later Zaydī literature.[81]

Unlike Zayd, al-Bāqir never thought of resorting to the sword. Instead, people were attracted to him on account of the extensive knowledge that had earned him the title of Bāqir al-'Ilm. His noble birth, primogeniture and personality played no less of a role in establishing his position and gaining him followers. More than this, his views on the imamate had a significant impact upon a number of people, who became permanently attached to him and his family. In contrast to Zayd and his supporters, al-Bāqir's school maintained that the institution of the imamate was hereditary in nature and did not depend on the *khurūj* of the imam. Thus al-Bāqir was introducing the idea of a non-rebelling imamate. This was significant and timely as many had by then come to believe that the point of claiming the imamate was to bid for power, that is political power.

A stronger argument in favour of al-Bāqir's school was its conviction that the Prophet had, before his death, expressly designated and appointed 'Alī as his successor by *naṣṣ*, that is by means of explicit designation. This meant that, since the Prophet had sanctioned 'Alī's appointment, the succession of Abū Bakr and 'Umar was an invalid usurpation. It must be pointed out, however, that al-Bāqir was never known to have reviled the two caliphs.[82] According to a tradition in Ibn Sa'd,[83] when asked if any one from among the Prophet's family spoke ill of the two caliphs, al-Bāqir replied that, on the contrary, they had always loved them, followed them both and 'prayed for them' or 'asked for forgiveness for them' – *istaghfara lahumā*.

Al-Bāqir, by insisting on the *naṣṣ* of the imam, meant that the imam had his authority by divine appointment and not from any human electors or from the *bay'a* (pledge of allegiance) of ordinary people. Furthermore, since the imam's

authority was from above, 'true knowledge was confined only to the imams in the Prophet's family; not to every member of the Prophet's family and certainly not to the whole community.' It was thus, he held, that the whole tradition of the community was invalid as a proper source for law. This also meant that al-Bāqir did not allow the practice of *ijtihād* and *ikhtiyār*, nor did he advocate individual opinions (*ārā'*) of the kind advocated by the Batriyya. The imam's followers should seek his judgement on each new question that arose because he was the only authority able to guarantee the true tradition of law. For the inspired imam was the recipient of that special sum of knowledge (*'ilm*) handed down to him which was hereditary and the exclusive right of each succeeding imam.

Al-Bāqir and the Ghulāt

Al-Bāqir faced problems created by certain other individuals who came to be classed as the Ghulāt. The term *ghulāt* was a general term of disapproval used in reference to those accused of exaggeration where beliefs and personalities were concerned, especially excessive reverence towards the imams on whom they often conferred divinity. These individuals also freely speculated on wider issues of religious importance, such as the nature of God, the soul and the afterlife. One such person was the already mentioned Bayān b. Sim'ān.[84] Initially he believed that Abū Hāshim would return as the Mahdī. He and his followers, the Bayāniyya, adopted extremist views about Abū Hāshim and claimed that he had conferred prophethood on Bayān on behalf of God. According to another report,[85] Bayān later wrote to al-Bāqir, perhaps after Abū Hāshim's death, calling on him to accept him as a prophet. Probably after al-Bāqir's death he is believed to have claimed that al-Bāqir had appointed him as his emissary. Other reports, however, say that he was hostile to al-Bāqir. Still others maintain that he was planning a revolt, either in the name of al-Bāqir's son, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, or of al-Nafs al-Zakiyya, a Ḥasanid who actually revolted in 145/762–3. Bayān was executed in Kūfa by the order of the

governor, Khālid al-Qasrī.[86]

Another Ghulāt group were known as the Ḥarbiyya or Ḥārithiyya after their leader 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥarb.[87] The sources ascribe to this group a prominent role in the introduction of the theory of metempsychosis (*tanāsukh*) and other extremist ideas. After the death of Abū Hāshim, Ibn Ḥarb taught that the Divine Spirit (*rūḥ Allāh*) had been present in the Prophet Muḥammad and had successively been transferred to 'Alī, al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya, Abū Hāshim and finally to Ibn Ḥarb, who thus became the imam until the reappearance of Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya. However, when his claim of omniscience was found to be spurious by his followers, many of them renounced him in favour of 'Abd Allāh b. Mu'āwiya. It has been suggested that Ibn Ḥarb eventually converted to Ṣufrī Khārijism and died a Ṣufrī.

Another individual regularly classed among the Ghulāt who caused problems for al-Bāqir was al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-'Ijlī.[88] He was a client of the governor Khālid b. 'Abd Allāh al-Qasrī and claimed that al-Bāqir had appointed him as the *waṣī*. Later, perhaps after al-Bāqir's death, he claimed that he was an agent of Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥasan (al-Nafs al-Zakiyya). He claimed the prophethood and imamate for himself and said that the angel Jibrā'īl brought him revelations and that he could raise the dead. Khālid b. 'Abd Allāh al-Qasrī had him arrested, killed and crucified along with Bayān.

Yet another person who professed to be the *waṣī* of al-Bāqir was Abū Manṣūr, who belonged to the tribe of 'Ijl and lived in Kūfa.[89] Abū Manṣūr further claimed that he had experienced an ascension to heaven, in the course of which he had been appointed by God as a prophet and messenger. He too was executed by the governor of 'Irāq in 125/742.

Mu'ammar was another of those who adopted extremist views about al-Bāqir.[90] He claimed that al-Bāqir and another follower of his, Abū al-Khaṭṭāb, were both gods. They were gods in the heaven while he, Mu'ammar, was god on earth and knew the merit of the heavenly god. He also claimed the divinity of Abū Ṭālib, 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, Muḥammad and 'Alī.

The Controversy Over the Time of al-Bāqir's Death

Various controversies have arisen over conflicting dates of death for al-Bāqir,[91] the main question being whether Zayd claimed the leadership and stood as a rival to al-Bāqir in his lifetime. The problem is rendered even more complex by the fact that the historical sources do not delve into doctrinal issues, while the heresiographical writers restrict themselves to the latter and refrain from giving any significant dates. Nevertheless, if we maintain that Zayd revolted in 122/739, after his arrest on the orders of Hishām in 120/737, and take into account the words of some of Zayd's supporters, spoken when they cross-examined and abandoned him,[92] it appears that al-Bāqir, although not alive at the time, could not have been dead for very long.[93]

Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān gives an interesting account of the reason for this group's sudden decision to cross-examine Zayd.[94] The report says that when Zayd was released after his arrest by Yūsuf b. 'Umar, his followers encouraged him to rise in rebellion. He confused people with the idea of *khurūj*, saying that one who remains at home and lets down the curtains (upon himself) is not an imam; an imam is one who unsheaths his sword and rises in accordance with the command of Allāh. Here, the author adds, he meant Abū Ja'far al-Bāqir. The narrative continues, relating that when Zayd's cause gained popularity, al-Bāqir feared there would be *fitna*. So he chose a trusted follower and prepared him with certain questions for Zayd. Accordingly, one day when Zayd was with his group, he was asked by this man whether what he was claiming was in accordance with his father's wishes. Zayd denied that he was following his father's wishes but continued to relate the idea of *khurūj*, mentioned above, to the man. So the man asked him:

> If no one amongst you were to rise in rebellion, does it mean then, that there would be no imam, and if a group of people were all to arise, then would they all be imams?

Zayd, according to the author, remained silent and those who were present realised the weakness of his claims. Thereafter the same man who had questioned him told Zayd that his brother al-Bāqir had informed him that their father, 'Alī, Zayn al-'Ābidīn, had made the *waṣiyya* to him. At this, Zayd retorted that if his father had made such a covenant to his brother, he would surely have informed him. So the man asked:

> Then why is it that the Prophet Ya'qūb warned Yūsuf not to relate his dream to his brothers for fear they might conspire against him while he was not asked to conceal the matter from the people?

Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān goes on to mention two reports, one saying that Zayd became silent after this since he could not formulate a reply, and the second maintaining that Zayd told them that what he was doing was according to his father's orders. It was after this incident, continues al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, that some of his followers cross-examined Zayd about Abū Bakr and 'Umar's position and then abandoned him. From the Qāḍī's account of Zayd's revolt, it seems that al-Bāqir was still alive at the time when Hishām confronted Zayd with certain allegations and had him arrested and then released. Nevertheless, before relating this sequence of events, he mentions that al-Bāqir died in 114/732 and later places Zayd's death in 122/739. In any case, if we are to maintain that Zayd was arrested in 120/737 and the revolt took place in 122/739, then al-Bāqir's death could well have occurred after the conflict in 120/737 but before Zayd's actual revolt in 122/739.

Yet another incident given in al-Ṭabarī would place al-Bāqir's, death at an even later date – as late as, or even later than, 125/742. Someone by the name of 'Amr b. 'Alī approached al-Bāqir and said to him:

> Hishām has been reigning for a long time and his period of rule has lasted nearly twenty years whereas people claim that the Prophet Sulaymān had asked his Lord not to let anyone

> rule longer than him, which the people claim to be twenty years.

Al-Bāqir replied:

> I have no idea of what people say but I have heard my father, who heard it from his father, who heard it from 'Alī, who heard the Prophet say: God will never let a king in a community of a Prophet live as long as that Prophet.

If this conversation took place in the year 125/742, as mentioned by al-Ṭabarī, it implies that al-Bāqir was still alive at the time, whereas earlier in the same work, when narrating Zayd's revolt in 122/739, he includes Abū Mikhnaf's report about a group abandoning Zayd and approaching Ja'far al-Ṣādiq as the representative of al-Bāqir's claims.[96]

However, since the accounts from al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān and al-Ṭabarī both exhibit a total disregard for chronology and historical circumstance, they cannot be taken as historical evidence. For this reason, the date of al-Bāqir's death remains an open question.

CHAPTER FOUR

Al-Bāqir's Views on the Imamate

This chapter looks at al-Bāqir's interpretation of the imamate. In his view, imamate, like prophethood, is divinely ordained and based on the Qur'ān. He further elucidates his views by emphasising the prophetic traditions that demonstrate the affinity between the Prophet and 'Alī. This is subsequently reflected in his theology of the imamate in which he describes the attributes that an imam possesses. The imam is to be followed because of his inherent qualities, including *'ilm* (knowledge) and *'iṣma* (impeccability). Al-Bāqir's views on the imamate had a profound impact on a number of people who as a result became attached to his circle of adherents despite the divergent notions of authority that existed at the time.

The Qur'ānic Basis of the Imamate

In the discussion of the nature and basis of the imamate, Shī'ī sources suggest that al-Bāqir laid great emphasis on the Qur'ānic verse 5:55.[1] This verse can be translated as:

> Indeed your [real] Protector [or Guardian] is only God, His Messenger and those believers who perform prayer and give the *zakāt* while prostrating.

or as:

> Indeed your [real] Protector [or Guardian] is only God, His Messenger and those believers who perform prayer and give the *zakāt*, and they are the ones who prostrate.[2]

The difference between these two translations depends on one single letter, i.e. the *wāw* which, besides being a conjunction (*wāw al-'atf*), can also be grammatically used in this position to introduce the state a person was in when performing the action in the previous clause (*wāw al-ḥāl*). The first translation of the verse takes the *ḥāl* into account, while the second ignores it. Both these translations have significant implications. If the *ḥāl* is rejected, it would mean that all believers are fit to be the *walī* (guardian), whereas if the *ḥāl* is accepted then, besides God and His Messenger, the *walāya* is restricted to those believers who give *zakāt* while still prostrating in prayer.

Muslim exegetes[3] have, over the years, entertained contradictory views on this verse. Some believe that it refers to 'Alī who, while kneeling in prayer, once threw his ring[4] to a beggar who stood asking for alms. Others maintain that the verse really refers merely to believers. They maintain that it was revealed when 'Ubāda b. al-Ṣāmit freed himself from the patronage and alliance of the Banū Qaynuqā' and went over to the Messenger and the believers.[5] Still others, like Ibn al-Kalbī, think it was revealed regarding 'Abd Allāh b. Salām and his companions when they became Muslims and the Jews broke off their contract of clientage (*muwālāt*).[6]

Commenting on the verse, al-Bāqir categorically maintains that it was revealed at the time when the Messenger was with a group of Jews, amongst whom 'Abd Allāh b. al-Salām was present.[7] As soon as the verse was revealed, the Messenger got up and walked towards the mosque where he met a beggar. Inquiring if anyone had given him anything, the beggar pointed to a man who was still praying. The man was 'Alī.

However, what we read of al-Bāqir's view according to two of his traditions mentioned by al-Ṭabarī is quite different from the accounts given in al-Qummī, al-Ṭūsī and al-Ṭibrisī. In al-Ṭabarī's account,[8] when al-Bāqir is asked with reference to the

verse in question, 'who are those who believe?' his reply is '*al-ladhīna āmanū*', 'those who believe'. When the group cornered him, saying they had heard the verse was revealed in reference to 'Alī, al-Bāqir gave an equivocal reply: ''Alī is among those who believe.' Al-Ṭabarī's selection of reports on this verse is both fascinating and revealing. He puts forward the varying reports alongside each other without assessing them, sometimes using the same authority to narrate contrary views. It is interesting to find al-Ṭabarī using al-Bāqir's traditions twice to deny the Shīʿī position, which would suggest that there had been some early arguments about al-Bāqir's position. Moreover, the two traditions used by al-Ṭabarī have a common origin in the *isnād*[9] which is itself regarded as problematic by some critics.[10]

There seems to be, therefore, strong evidence that the verse was regarded by some as referring to 'Alī; for even al-Ṭabarī, despite his use of traditions to the contrary ascribed to Abū Jaʿfar (i.e. al-Bāqir), found it necessary to include a number of traditions indicating that the verse referred to 'Alī. But the question remains how it can refer to a single person when the form used in the verse is in the plural: *alladhīna yuqīmūna al-ṣalāt.* The arguments al-Ṭūsī uses to address this problem are taken directly from the Qurʾān where not only God refers to Himself in the plural[11] but where there are a number of other verses in which the plural is used when in reality only a single person is meant. For instance, verse 168 of *sūra Āl ʿImrān* says:

> Those who say about their brethren [who were slain] while they themselves sat [at ease]: If only they had obeyed us they would not have been killed.

Although it uses the plural, the exegetes believe that this verse was revealed in connection with 'Abd Allāh b. Ubayy b. Salūl. There is, therefore, no reason why the plural form in verse 5:55 could not have been meant for a single person, namely 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. Moreover, since God used the word *walī* and not *awliyāʾ* in the first place, it suggests that only a single person was actually meant.

However, what emerges from the Shīʿī sources is the fact that, in al-Bāqir's view, the Messenger had been reluctant to explain this *walāya* of ʿAlī to the believers. It is reported that a man approached al-Bāqir saying to him that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d.c. 110/728–9) had told him that the Messenger had received a certain message, and when he hesitated to deliver it to the people, God threatened him with punishment if he did not do so. Then al-Bāqir asked the questioner whether al-Ḥasan had told him what the message was. He answered in the negative, whereupon al-Bāqir told him: 'By God, he certainly knows what the message was, but has deliberately concealed it.'[12] The questioner then asked al-Bāqir to clarify the message.

Explaining this message, al-Bāqir said that, just as the Messenger had elucidated the details regarding the verses on prayer, alms giving, fasting and pilgrimage, so too he was expected to expound on the *walāya* that was revealed in the aforementioned verse 5:55. But when asked to do this in practice, the Messenger felt extremely uneasy, fearing that people would apostatise. As his reluctance continued, God repeated the command in verse 5:67.

> O Messenger, deliver [to the people] what has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not do so then you have not delivered His message; and Allāh will protect you from the people. Indeed Allāh does not guide the disbelieving people.

Al-Bāqir continues that the Messenger, upon receiving this verse, carried out God's command and endorsed the *walāya*[13] or imamate of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib at Ghadīr Khumm.[14] The Sunnī commentators obviously do not interpret the verse to mean that God's Message is only truly conveyed by the appointment of an imam. By 'that which has been revealed' they understand the whole Book, namely that the Prophet should not omit any verse out of fear or caution.[15]

Al-Ṭabarī begins his account by giving his interpretation, namely that the revelation concerns those stories which God communicated about the Jews and the Christians. Since these

passages recorded their shortcomings and their faults as well as their tampering with the scripture, the Messenger, in al-Ṭabarī's view, was apprehensive about revealing the message in full. He believes this to be the reason for the revelation of this verse. Nevertheless, he includes varying reports of the Prophet having concealed something. At the same time, he also quotes traditions from 'Ā'isha to say that whoever reports that the Prophet had concealed something from the revelation is a liar. Al-Ṭabarī then goes on to add that the commentators are divided over the reason for this revelation. Some say that it was because a bedouin wanted to kill the Messenger and therefore God said He would protect him, while others believe that he was afraid of the Quraysh.[16]

However, according to al-Bāqir it was only after the endorsement of *walāya* that God revealed verse 5:3: 'This day I have perfected your faith for you and completed my favours upon you and have chosen for you Islam as a faith/religion.' Al-Bāqir's position regarding the verse '*al-yawm akmaltu lakum* ...', reported in various Shī'ī sources,[17] is very clear. It was, he says, revealed on the occasion of 'Alī's appointment as the imam at Ghadīr Khumm. Sunnī commentators like al-Bayḍāwī do not believe the verse was revealed at that time, nor do they interpret 'the perfection of religion and completion of God's favour or blessings' as a reference to the appointment of an imam after the Prophet. In al-Bayḍāwī's view, 'today I have perfected your religion for you' means either that God perfected his religion with victory and distinction over all other religions, or that this perfection consists in defining the foundations of the doctrine and introducing the principles of the laws and the rules of legal judgment to the believers. 'I have completed my blessings upon you' means that God brought to fruition His blessings by means of guidance and victory, or with the perfection of religion, or with the conquest of Mecca and the destruction of the order of *jāhiliyya*.[18]

Al-Ṭabarī not only excludes reports in favour of the Shī'ī position, but goes on to include certain traditions to deny their position. It is also noteworthy that all these traditions are on

the authority of Ibn 'Abbās.[19] Commenting on the different reports, al-Ṭabarī maintains that the correct reports are those which say that God informed His Prophet, and thereby the faithful, that He had perfected their faith on the day this verse was revealed by making the holy land exclusive for them and debarring the idolators so that the believers might make the pilgrimage without having to mix with them. It is clear that al-Ṭabarī is at pains not only to deny the Shī'ī position but also, contrary to his normal practice, to add his own views about what he considers to be correct.

Another Qur'ānic verse used by al-Bāqir[20] to emphasise the *walāya* of the imams is 4:59 translated as:

> O ye who believe! Obey God and obey the Messenger and those who hold authority [from] amongst you ...

This verse is even more controversial than those already mentioned, the obvious problem being the identity of the *ūlī al-amr*. Numerous reports have come down to us giving varied suggestions, some maintaining that the *ūlī al-amr* are 'the rulers' and others that they are the scholars.[21] Al-Bāqir's[22] commentary on this verse is that the *ūlī al-amr* are the imams from the 'family of Muḥammad', although a tradition from his son al-Ṣādiq, found in al-Ṭabarī, says that they are the scholars. Al-Ṭabarī in his commentary also includes reports which maintain that the *ūlī al-amr* were Abū Bakr and 'Umar.[23] At the same time, he excludes traditions in favour of 'Alī and his family.

However, the matter does not end here, for the words that follow the reference to the *ūlī al-amr* have been used against the Shī'ī position. The verse continues as follows:

> If you differ about anything, then refer it to God and His Messenger if you are [truly] believers in God and the Hereafter. That is better and more seemly in the end.

In reply to this, al-Bāqir uses another Qur'ānic verse 4:83:

> If they had only referred it to the Messenger and those who had authority among them, then those among them who can derive knowledge would have known it.

Using this verse to reassert the position of the imams, al-Bāqir maintains that obedience to them is incumbent as God made them 'the people of knowledge' and enabled them to extract that knowledge.[24] It is interesting to note that even al-Ṭabarī has a tradition from one of the earliest exegetes, Mujāhid (d.c. 100/718),[25] to strengthen the position of the *ūlī al-amr.* According to Shī'ī sources,[26] when al-Bāqir was asked about the verse 'Obey God, obey the Messenger and those who hold authority amongst you [*ūlī al-amr*]' he responded by giving a long survey of Qur'ānic allusions to the imams saying (4:51):

> Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Book believing in sorcery and evil [saying] to the unbelievers that they are better guided than those who believe.

Explaining this verse, he says that such people claim that the leaders who err and those who urge people to hell fire are better guided than the family of Muḥammad. Using another verse he says, 'they are those whom God has cursed and those whom God will curse, you will find [that they] have no helper' (4:52). Referring to the verse 'We have already given the family of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) the Book and Wisdom and conferred upon them a great kingdom' (i.e. We made from them messengers, prophets and imams), al-Bāqir inquires whether they had a share in the kingdom (*mulk*), meaning the imamate and the caliphate.

Commenting on the verse, 'Behold! they give not even a speck on the date-stone to the people,' (4:53) al-Bāqir says that they were 'the people' whom God meant in the above verse.[27] Relating another Qur'ānic verse (4:54) – 'Or do they envy the people for what God has bestowed upon them of His bounty?' – he says that they were those who were envied by the people because of the favour of the imamate which God bestowed upon

them, excluding other creatures. Referring to another verse (4:58) – 'Lo, Allāh has commanded you that you restore deposits to their owners ...' – al-Bāqir says that it was the imams who were meant and it was they who have to hand over to their successors 'the special books', 'the special knowledge' (*'ilm*) and 'the weapons of the Prophet'. They are the truthful ones referred to in the Qur'ān (9:119) as well as 'the believers' (9:105). God has made the imams, according to al-Bāqir's interpretation of verse 2:143, an *umma wasaṭ* so that they might be God's witnesses to His creatures. His definition of 'a great kingdom conferred upon the family of Ibrāhīm' (4:54) is that God made from among them leaders whose obedience was equal to the obedience of God and whose disobedience was equal to the disobedience of God. How, argues al-Bāqir, could people accept this position for the family of Ibrāhīm and deny it to the family of Muḥammad?

The imams, he adds, are the chosen ones and are named as 'those who submitted' not only in the Qur'ān but also in the earlier scriptures.[28] Since they have been endowed with knowledge from God, the imams, says al-Bāqir,[29] have the clear signs of God in their hearts, and since they are the *ahl al-dhikr*, namely the people of the Message,[30] it is they who should be questioned about its interpretation. The Prophet, continues al-Bāqir, was a warner to his people while in every age there is an imam to guide his people about what the Prophet brought.[31] The first of these guides after the Prophet was 'Alī and then his *awṣiyā'*, his heirs, after him. Al-Bāqir then adds yet another Qur'ānic verse (3:5) – 'And no one knows its interpretation except God and those firmly rooted in *'ilm* [knowledge].'

Commenting on this verse,[32] al-Bāqir says that the Messenger was the best of those firmly rooted in knowledge. God taught him regarding all that was revealed to him and how to interpret it. Thereafter, it is the imams who know all the interpretations of the Qur'ān. The imams are, according to his interpretation of verse 35:32, the chosen servants of God who have been given the Qur'ān as an inheritance:

> Then We gave the scripture as an inheritance to those whom We chose among our worshippers. But among them are some who wrong themselves and some who follow the mid-road while some outstrip [others] through good deeds by Allāh's leave. That is the great favour.

The people who outstrip others in performing good deeds are the imams, those who follow the middle course are the people who acknowledge the right of the imam, and those who wrong themselves are the people who do not accept the imams. Concluding his long survey of Qur'ānic allusions to the imams, al-Bāqir points out to the questioner that the non-Shī'a claim the above verse to have been revealed for them.[33] He then argues that if it had in fact been revealed with reference to them all, then they would all be the chosen ones and all would go to paradise (which is hardly the case). Al-Bāqir continues that the non-Shī'a made a similar claim on the interpretation (*ta'wīl*) of the earlier verse (of … *ūlī al-amr*).

Al-Bāqir maintains that not only is obedience to the imam incumbent upon the believers, but that love for them is a duty enjoined upon the worshippers according to verse 42:22:

> Say, I do not ask for any reward except love for the relations …[34]

However, he adds that the community differs over the interpretation of this verse. There are four different groups, each upholding disparate views. One group believes that this verse was in fact revealed for the *ahl al-bayt* of the Messenger of Allāh. The second group insists that this was abrogated by another verse 34:49:

> Say, whatever I ask you with regard to my reward, it is [actually] for you. I rely for my reward on no one except God and He is witness to everything.

Refuting their position, al-Bāqir argues that this verse could only have been revealed either before the first or after it.[35] If it

was revealed before, then obviously it cannot cancel or abrogate the verse that has been revealed after it. On the other hand, if it was revealed after the verse 'love for relations' then this later verse makes the first verse all the more emphatic since the love for relations, which the Prophet had asked of the believers, benefits not the Prophet but the believers. Hence the verse reads 'Say whatever I ask you in way of return, is meant for you ...'

According to al-Bāqir, the third group believes that this verse was meant for all the Arabs, since the Prophet had a relation in every Arab house. They said that the Prophet had asked them to love him through them. Al-Bāqir argues that if those whom the Prophet asked were believers, then they would love him for their faith in him and their belief in him. Why would God reward them for this? On the other hand, if those whom He is addressing are unbelievers, then how can He reward them for something in which they do not believe? Moreover, al-Bāqir says that restricting 'the believers' to the Arabs alone is ignorance on their part as well as clearly presumptuous; it is a misconstrual of the Book of God and a distortion of His words, for the verse is addressed to all the believers, Arabs as well as non-Arabs, and all those who believe in God and the Prophet – all have been enjoined to love the relations of His Prophet.

The fourth group, basing itself on a report from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, holds that this verse meant gaining proximity to God through obedience to Him. Al-Bāqir rails against this, calling al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī a 'misconstruer of God's words' (*al-muḥarrif li kalām Allāh*) and referring to his interpretation as far from the truth. He argues that if indeed this were the interpretation, the words 'love' and 'reward' would be meaningless in the verse. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān suggests that the 'misconstruer of God's words' concocted this false interpretation deliberately as he knew full well and had, in fact, once reported on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās that the Prophet himself considered his relations to be ''Alī, Fāṭima and their two sons'.[30]

Al-Bāqir says that the imams are the light of God (*nūr Allāh*) mentioned in various verses of the Qur'ān such as 44:8:

> And believe in Allāh and His Messenger and the Light that We have sent down.

Another such verse is 28:28:

> O ye who believe! Fear God and believe in His Apostle and He will bestow upon you a double portion of His mercy; He will provide for you a light by which ye shall walk ...[37]

The imams, says al-Bāqir, are the light which guides men along the path of righteousness. They illuminate the hearts of the believers in whom the imam's light is brighter than the resplendent sunlight shining during the day. Interpreting another verse of the Qur'ān 6:122 – 'Is he who was dead and We raised him unto life and set for him a light whereby he walks among the people, similar to him who is in utter darkness from which there is no way out ...'[38] – al-Bāqir says that 'the dead' means those who did not know anything; 'the light whereby one walks among people' means the imam who guides and 'those in darkness from which there is no way out' means those who do not know the imam. According to al-Ṭabarī, this verse was revealed in connection with two men, a believer and a non-believer. In his view, the exegetes differ over the identity of the believer: some say he was 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, while others believe he was 'Ammār b. Yāsir.[39] The non-believer is said to have been Abū Jahl b. Hishām. Continuing his commentary, al-Ṭabarī gives other traditions to say that some believe 'the dead' meant those who had gone astray, 'We raised them to life' meant 'We guided them', and 'the light' was right guidance. He then gives varied reports that 'the light in the midst of men' was the Qur'ān, or the right guidance, or Islam. He does not, however, report any tradition in favour of the imam's position as given in Shīʿī sources.[40]

Emphasising the hereditary character of the imamate, al-Bāqir says that it remained in the progeny of the imams. Here he is interpreting Sūra 33:6 – 'Those related by blood are nearer to one another in the book of God.'[41] He further explains that

this verse was revealed especially with regard to the children of al-Ḥusayn. Another such verse describing the imam's succession is 43:28 – 'And He made it a word to continue in his posterity that they may return.'[42]

Al-Bāqir also puts forward the concept of *'iṣma*[43] (infallibility) of the imam, his divine protection from sin and error. He bases this on his interpretation of the Qur'ānic verse 33:33:

> And God only wishes to remove uncleanliness from you, O People of the House (*ahl al-bayt*) and to purify you thoroughly.[44]

Some Sunnī scholars also accept that this verse was revealed for 'Alī, Fāṭima, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.[45]

Closely related to the concept of *'iṣma* is the notion of *shafā'a* or intercession, which is inherent in the theory of the imamate propounded by al-Bāqir. Many of these Qur'ānic verses interpreted by al-Bāqir imply the intercessional powers of the imam. One of them is 7:17: 'on the day when we shall call all men with their imam ...' Commenting on this verse, al-Bāqir says that, when it was revealed, the Muslims asked the Messenger whether he was not the imam for all the people. The Prophet replied that he was the Messenger of Allāh for all people, but after him there would be the imams from his family who would be oppressed rather than accepted. However, those who loved the imams, followed them and believed in them, were indeed from him (the Prophet) and would meet him (in Paradise), while those who oppressed them and called them liars were not from him and would be disowned by him.[46]

Basing himself on the Qur'ān, al-Bāqir undoubtedly views the imamate as one of the duties imposed by God upon the believer. In fact, *walāya* or *imāma* is the most important duty. He considers it to be the major pillar of Islam and the pivot around which all other pillars revolve. The imams are, in al-Bāqir's view, the protectors or guardians of the believers and obedience to them is an obligatory duty. They are the people of the Message, to whom the Book, that is the Qur'ān, is given as an inheritance. Thus they are the interpreters of that

Message, and since they are the ones firmly rooted in knowledge it is they who should be asked about its interpretation. People envy the imams because they are the recipients of God's favour and because of the light and wisdom that has been bestowed upon them. Being God's witnesses over His creatures, they are therefore the ones who should guide others.

The imams are pure and protected from sin and error and they are the light of God by which people may walk and be guided aright, so love for them was made incumbent upon the believers. On the day of Resurrection, all people would be called by their imams. Thus it is evident that al-Bāqir, in propounding his theory of the imamate, not only maintained its hereditary and divine character, but also its necessity in this world for the sake of providing true knowledge and guidance.

The *Ḥadīth* Basis of the Imamate

Al-Bāqir's views on the divine ordination of the imamate were primarily based on the Qur'ānic revelation. He adduces further proof from the traditions of the Prophet. Al-Bāqir quotes many traditions, but here an attempt will be made to lay stress on those accepted by all Muslims, Shīʿī as well as non-Shīʿī. This does not mean that the non-Shīʿī scholars necessarily agree with al-Bāqir's interpretation of these traditions. For them, as is known, the question of the imamate is not a fundamental issue as it is for the Shīʿa; 'it is neither a part of rational sciences nor of *fiqh*,' says al-Ghazālī.[47]

The *ḥadīth* of Ghadīr Khumm is, in al-Bāqir's view,[48] one of the most important traditions in proving the Prophet's declaration of ʿAlī as imam. It has been related with slightly different versions by various Shīʿī scholars.[49] The gist of the *ḥadīth* is that, on his return from the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Prophet stopped at Ghadīr Khumm to make an announcement to the pilgrims who were then to separate and go their own way.[50] He called for a congregational prayer and had a special pulpit erected. After the prayer, the Prophet asked the people '*man awlā bikum*', who has the greatest claim over you? The people

replied that God and His Messenger knew better. The Prophet then said: 'Do I not have a greater claim upon you than you have upon yourselves according to what God, the Exalted has said, "The Prophet has a greater claim (*awlā*) upon the believers than their own selves"?' (33:6). They replied, 'Yes, O Messenger of God'. After repeating this three times and making God a witness to their agreement, the Prophet took the hand of 'Alī, lifted it with his own hand and said, '*man kuntu mawlāhu fa 'Alī mawlāhu*' (He whose *mawlā* I am, 'Alī is his *mawlā*). He then declared, 'O God, help whoever helps him, oppose whoever opposes him, support whoever supports him, forsake whoever forsakes him and turn the light to whatever direction he turns.' Hearing this, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb said, 'Congratulations to you, O 'Alī! You have become the *mawlā* of every believer, man and woman.'[51]

The Sunnis also confirm this tradition,[52] which has been mentioned by a great number of Sunnī traditionists.[53] However, this does not mean that the Sunnī scholars admit that the Prophet invoked God to install 'Alī as imam by pronouncing the invocation of imamate upon him. Al-Bāqillānī, for instance, argues that the Qur'ānic phrase *awlā bi al-mu'minīn min anfusihim*, which he interprets as 'in charge of the believers more than their own selves,' does not necessarily imply that 'Alī is also in charge of them, even though he immediately added 'he whose *mawlā* I am, 'Alī is his *mawlā*'. In his view, the two words *awlā* and *mawlā* are by no means synonymous. Another argument is that the word *mawlā* does not necessarily mean master and therefore does not necessarily signify an imam obedience to whom is incumbent upon the believers.[54]

The word *mawlā* is derived from the verb *waliya* (to be near). Grammatically, it belongs to a class of nouns called noun of place and thus signifies either the place where the action of the verb is committed, or the subject in which the state of being expressed by that verb has its existence. The word *mawlā* therefore signifies the place in which, or the person in whom, proximity exists. It can therefore mean master, patron, beloved, supporter, freed slave, companion, client, neighbour,

confederate or relation. It is easy to see that the idea of proximity or nearness pervades these various meanings, either in a physical or a moral sense. When a word can denote so many meanings, the context in which it is used is crucial. As the word *mawlā* was used by the Prophet soon after the phrase in which he used *awlā* (*man awlā bikum*) it is quite likely that he meant the implications were synonymous.

Some try to explain the circumstances which led the Prophet to his pronouncement.[55] In their view, the problem was that a number of people were grumbling about 'Alī because of the way he dealt with the distribution of the spoils in the al-Yaman expedition. This expedition had just been successfully executed under 'Alī's leadership and he and others who had taken part in it had gone directly to Mecca to join the Prophet in the pilgrimage. The Prophet was, they argue, merely trying to dispel these ill-feelings against 'Alī.

The normal ways in which the word *mawlā* and its plural *mawālī* appear in the Qur'ān are as follows:

mawālī	4:33	heirs
	19:5	kinsfolk
mawālīkum	33:5	your clients
al-mawlā	22:13	Patron (Allāh)
	44:41	Friend
mawlākum	3:150	Your protector (Allāh)
	8:40	Your Befriender – a Transcendent Patron (Allāh)
	22:78	Your Protecting Friend (Allāh)
	57:15	Your Patron (Fire)
	66:2	Your Protector (Allāh)
mawlānā	2:286	Our Protector (Allāh)
	9:51	Our Protecting Friend (Allāh)
mawlāhu	16:76	His owner
	66:4	His Protecting Friend (Allāh)
mawlāhum	10:30	their Lord (Allāh)

It is quite obvious that the word was used in pre-Islamic and early Islamic practice. It was used for both *mawlā* as a master, patron, friend as well as for the relationship between the *mawlā* and the *mawālī* (clients). It is also used in the Constitution of Medina as the next of kin having the power of succession. In Islamic *fiqh*, the *walī* is the person who gives away a woman in marriage as well as the person who demands blood wit.

More important than the ways in which the word *mawlā* was used, before and after the coming of Islam, is the context in which the word was used by the Prophet in his sermon. As mentioned earlier, he had used the word *mawlā* soon after quoting the words of the Qur'ān, *awlā bi al-mu'minīn min anfusihim* (has a greater claim on the believers than their own selves). Therefore it seems most likely that the word was used in the same context despite contrary observations. To the Shī'a, according to al-Bāqir,[56] this pronouncement was not only indicative of the Prophet's inclination towards 'Alī, but was a clear and specific appointment which the people deliberately misconstrued.

Another tradition which is taken by al-Bāqir as evidence for the imamate is the Prophet's statement to 'Alī: 'You are to me what Aaron was to Moses except that there is no Prophet after me.'[57] This *ḥadīth* is recognised by the Sunnīs[58] as one of the sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*) traditions. However, although admitting its authenticity, the Sunnīs do not consider this to be an indication of 'Alī's appointment to the imamate. They maintain that the Prophet only pronounced this *ḥadīth* on one, special occasion – when he set out on his expedition to Tabuk and left 'Alī in charge in Medina. Some have insinuated that the Prophet left 'Alī behind because he disapproved of him, and when 'Alī objected the Prophet replied, 'Are you not satisfied that you are to me what Aaron was to Moses, except that there is no Prophet after me?'

To the Sunnī scholars,[59] this meant that the Prophet made 'Alī his deputy over Medina as Moses had made Aaron his deputy over the Israelites when he went to Mount Sinai. According to the Sunnīs, Aaron had three positions in relation to

Moses.[60] In the first place he was his brother. Secondly, he was a Prophet like Moses. Thirdly, he was his deputy when Moses left the Israelites to go to Mount Sinai. The Sunnīs argue that since Aaron died before Moses, he could not be his successor. As ʿAlī was neither the Prophet's brother, nor a Prophet like Muḥammad, he could, they argued, only be like Aaron by being Muḥammad's deputy when he left for the military expedition to Tabuk, as was Aaron when Moses left for Mount Sinai.

The Ismaili author, Abū al-Fawāris,[61] argues along the same lines in favour of ʿAlī being Muḥammad's successor. Agreeing with the Sunnīs that the relationship of brotherhood and prophethood could not be applied to ʿAlī's relationship with Muḥammad, he argues that the only conceivable matter remaining was for ʿAlī to be his successor.[62] Whereas the Sunnīs believed that Muḥammad appointed ʿAlī as his deputy over Medina only during Muḥammad's expedition to Tabuk, Abū al-Fawāris says that there is no evidence that ʿAlī was deposed on the Prophet's return. Moreover, they argue that if Muḥammad's statement merely meant that his appointment of ʿAlī as his deputy was only for the time of his absence from Medina, then there was no reason for him to add, 'yet after me there is no Prophet'. This addition clearly indicates that the Prophet meant more than mere deputyship on a particular occasion.

One of the basic traditions used by al-Bāqir in proving the necessity of a testament is 'it is compulsory for every Muslim not to spend a single night without having a written testament on him [lit. his head].'[63] This is further strengthened by the Qurʾānic verse 2:180–181:

> It is prescribed for you, when death approaches one of you, if he leaves behind some wealth, that he make a testament to his parents and near of kin honourably – an obligation on the pious. And whoever changes it after hearing it – the sin rests on those who change it. Truly, God is All-hearing, All-knowing.[64]

This tradition on the necessity of a written testament is also mentioned and accepted by the Sunnīs, though with slight variations, and is considered to be sound, having been related by both al-Bukhārī and Muslim as well as other traditionists.[65]

Al-Bāqir stresses the necessity of the imamate by another tradition: 'He who dies without an imam shall die a death of ignorance.'[66] This tradition is recognised and considered extremely reliable, with different versions by both Sunnīs and Shī'īs. Ibn Ḥanbal relates it as follows: 'He who dies without an imam shall die in ignorance.'[67] Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj's version is: 'He who forsakes obedience [to the imam] shall meet God on the Day of Resurrection without any allegiance, and he who dies without having had allegiance [to an imam] shall die in ignorance.'[68] It is interesting here to note the Ismaili version of this tradition mentioned by al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān[69] and Abū al-Fawāris[70] where the term 'the Imam of the Time' (*Imām al-dahr*, *Imām al-'aṣr* or *Imām al-zamān*) is present. This implies that either the Ismaili authors introduced this term into the *ḥadīth* on account of their belief in the 'ever living guide', or that the term was omitted or suppressed by others.

Emphasising the necessity of the presence of an imam, al-Bāqir adds that no effort can avail anyone without guidance from the 'Imam of the Time'. In his view, such a person is like a lost sheep who searches in vain for its shepherd and flock until eventually it is devoured by the wolf who takes advantage of its confusion. Al-Bāqir is reported to have told one of his followers that if in this world people need a guide to travel even a few miles to a strange place, then what of the path to heaven of which they are far more ignorant?[71]

The fact that the Sunnī traditionists relate some of these traditions and consider them to be genuine does not mean that they accept the Shī'ī concept of the imamate, whether Ithnā'ashari or Ismaili. In the Sunnī view, the imam's function is pre-eminently political. Although he may perform religious functions, these do not necessarily lend him sanctity. He is merely a protector and executor of the *Sharī'a* who does not need to be divinely appointed, but is instead installed by *ijmā'*

(consensus).[72]

According to the Shīʿa on the other hand, the choice of an imam is not within the domain of the community; it is not its concern to decide who the imam should be. This follows from al-Bāqir's view that the *walāya* or the imamate is one of the pillars of Islam, indeed the most important pillar. 'Islam,' according to al-Bāqir:

> ... is built on seven pillars: *walāya* (love for and allegiance to the imam), *ṭahāra* (purification), *ṣalāt* (prayer), *zakāt* (almsgiving), *ṣawm* (fasting), *ḥajj* (pilgrimage) and *jihād* (striving in God's way). *Walāya* is the best among them, because through it and through the one to whom allegiance should be paid, the knowledge of the other pillars is reached.[73]

Being a matter of fundamental belief, consensus (*ijmāʿ*) cannot be applied to *walāya*, just as it cannot be applied in matters concerning monotheism, or the prophethood of Muḥammad, or his status as God's Messenger.[74]

The choice of an imam, according to al-Bāqir, was decided when God granted Ibrāhīm this favour and conferred the imamate on him and upon those of his progeny who did not go astray.[75] In fact, this favour was given to Ibrāhīm after God had originally accepted him, first as a worshipper, second as a prophet, third as a messenger, fourth as a friend and finally as an imam over the people. When this distinction was given to Ibrāhīm, he could not help asking God whether this favour would remain in his progeny, whereupon God answered that those who go astray would not receive it. Thus the choice of an imam comes from above and is a favour that God grants; it cannot be acquired.

The Theology of the Imamate

In enunciating the theory or the principle of the imamate, al-Bāqir postulated certain prerequisites for it, including *naṣṣ*, *ʿilm*, *nūr*, and *ʿiṣma*. Al-Bāqir, as noted, categorically maintained

that, contrary to the belief of some groups, the imam had to be divinely appointed and that his appointment had to be clear and precise, i.e. by *naṣṣ al-jalī* (explicit designation). He had to be quite specific about his theory in case there were loopholes in it which might be exploited by those who were already claiming the imamate during his time, as well as by those who might claim it in future.

In order that his theory would have sufficient credence, al-Bāqir had to begin with the appointment of 'Alī, who had been designated expressly by the Prophet Muḥammad. This, in his view, was done on several occasions culminating in the event of Ghadīr Khumm.[76] Al-Bāqir is reported to have said to Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī that the Prophet, before his death, was commanded by God to bequeath to 'Alī his knowledge, his faith and the Great Name (*al-ism al-a'ẓam*) that he had, as well as the legacy of knowledge and prophethood, so that the transmission of the divine heritage would be continued through the Prophet's progeny. This implies that this *naṣṣ*, which consisted of special knowledge, was meant exclusively for the offspring of the Prophet and thus was hereditary.

The hereditary character of the *naṣṣ* was the crucial point in the principle of the imamate that al-Bāqir advanced. He was trying to bring some order to the muddled, confused and chaotic ideas of the imamate rampant at the time and the idea of hereditary *naṣṣ* was a kind of restriction for all those who thought they could claim the *naṣṣ* and thus acquire a licence for leadership. It was in this manner – by *naṣṣ al-jalī* – that al-Bāqir appointed his son, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq. On a number of occasions, al-Bāqir let his followers know that Ja'far was the best of mankind and that he was the *Qā'im Āl Muḥammad* (one in charge of the Prophet's family).[77] When his days were drawing to a close, he asked for witnesses to be brought to him. Four people from the Quraysh were assembled, among whom was Nāfi', 'the freed man of 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar (d.c. 117/735)'.[78] Al-Bāqir is then reported to have asked them to write down what the Prophet Ya'qūb had entrusted to his son, and thus made a *naṣṣ* in respect of his own son Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.[79]

If the above report is authentic, then the summoning of witnesses from outside was a new development, for al-Bāqir's own appointment, according to traditions reported in al-Kulaynī, was made in the presence of his brothers when he was entrusted with the casket containing secret religious scrolls and the weapons of the Prophet. Apparently, both al-Bāqir, and later his son al-Ṣādiq, insisted upon the importance of these weapons which, they proclaimed, had the same significance for the Muslims as the *Tābūt* (Ark of Covenant) had for the Israelites.[80] Again, according to traditions found in al-Kulaynī, al-Bāqir maintained that his father Zayn al-'Ābidīn was designated by al-Ḥusayn,[81] who in turn was appointed by al-Ḥasan[82] whom 'Alī had designated.[83]

Besides the hereditary character of the *naṣṣ*, another unique feature of al-Bāqir's theory was that *naṣṣ* embodied in itself exclusive authoritative knowledge (*'ilm*) for its recipient. This *'ilm* had likewise to be traced back to 'Alī, of whom the Prophet had said 'I am the city of knowledge and 'Alī its gate'.[84] The Sunnīs also acknowledge this tradition, although they do not necessarily agree with the Shī'ī interpretation of it.[85] According to al-Bāqir's traditions in al-Kulaynī,[86] God appointed 'Alī as a flag or signpost between Himself and His creation and thus whoever acknowledges 'Alī is a believer, while whoever rejects him is an unbeliever. Again he adds that ''Alī is a door that God has opened; he who enters it is a believer and he who leaves it is an unbeliever.'

Al-Bāqir maintains that knowledge, which was granted to Adam, is never taken away; rather it is always inherited, passed on from generation to generation. ''Alī was the learned one of this community and a learned one from among us never perishes before leaving behind him someone from his family who inherits this knowledge from him or what God wills.' The imams, according to al-Bāqir, are the treasurers (*khuzzān*) of Allāh in the heavens and on the earth; they do not guard gold and silver, but divine knowledge. 'Alī had inherited the knowledge of all the *awṣiyā'* of the prophets just as the Prophet, who had been endowed with the sum of knowledge available to all

the preceding prophets, had imparted it to 'Alī, who, in turn, bequeathed it to his descendants. Every imam before death passes it on to his successor. This includes both the *ẓāhir* (exoteric) and the *bāṭin* (esoteric) sides of the Qur'ān and indeed, in al-Bāqir's view, none but the *awṣiyā'* can claim to possess the whole Qur'ān. Describing some aspects of the knowledge that is given to them and that is unfolded to them, al-Bāqir says that it includes the interpretation of the Qur'ān and its legal judgments, as well as the knowledge of changing times and adversities.[87]

The imams, too, according to al-Bāqir, know the Greatest Name of God (*ism Allāh al-a'ẓam*) which has seventy-three versions (*ḥarfan* – literally, letters). Al-Bāqir added that Āṣif (Aṣaph), who had known only one version, was able to reach the throne of Bilqis by pronouncing it,[88] while the imams knew seventy-two versions, the seventy-third being with Allāh Himself. This refers exclusively to hidden knowledge.

Thus the doctrine of the imamate put forward by al-Bāqir was based primarily on knowledge, not on political rule, although the imams were also entitled to the latter. If the imams wished to know anything, they would know it. However, in order to avoid confusion, al-Bāqir did make a distinction between the offices of a *rasūl* (messenger), a *nabī* (prophet) and a *muḥaddath* (one who is spoken to, i.e., the imam), and the way they acquired their knowledge. Thus, according to al-Bāqir, a messenger (*rasūl*) is one who is inspired externally by the mediation of the archangel Jibrā'īl. He may see the archangel and hear his words either in a dream or when awake. A prophet (*nabī*) either has visions of archangels without hearing them speak, or hears voices without seeing a figure. A *muḥaddath* does not see supernatural beings, either in dreams or in a wakeful state, but hears voices. The imams, says al-Bāqir, are the *muḥaddathūn* mentioned in the Qur'ān.[89]

Besides the bestowal of *'ilm*, the clear or manifest delegation of authority also appears to involve the transmission of *nūr*, light, for, as we noted earlier, the imams are, according to al-Bāqir, the light of God (*nūr Allāh*). When asked to comment

on the Qur'ānic verse 44:8 – 'And believe in Allāh and His Messenger and the *nūr* (light) that We have brought down' – al-Bāqir replied that 'the *nūr* (light) is indeed the *nūr* of the imams from the Prophet's family; they, [i.e. the imams], were the light that God has brought down and they [in fact] are the light of God (*nūr Allāh*) in the heavens and on earth.'[90] This spiritual light, which passes from generation to generation, is the symbol of that eternal knowledge (*'ilm*)[91] which forms part of the Prophet Muḥammad's testament (*waṣiyya*) to 'Alī and thereafter to the imams who followed him. According to this doctrine, 'Alī inherited the light only at the last moment of the Prophet's life.[92]

However, another tradition of al-Bāqir alludes to the concept of *nūr Muḥammad* which 'Alī inherits on birth. He is reported to have said to Jābir al-Ju'fī: 'O Jābir, the first beings that God created were Muḥammad and his family, the rightly guided ones and the guides; they were the phantoms of light before God.' Jābir asked, 'And what were the phantoms?' Al-Bāqir replied,

> Shadows of light, luminous bodies without spirits; they were strengthened by the Holy Spirit (*rūḥ al-quds*), through which Muḥammad and his family worshipped God. For that reason He created them forbearing, learned, endowed with filial piety, and pure; they worship God through prayer, fasting, prostrating themselves, enumerating His names, and pronouncing 'God is Great'.[93]

According to this concept, 'Alī's share of light was transferred on his birth. Traditions maintain that Muḥammad and 'Alī were created from the same (prophetic) light which passed through the loins of their common ancestors till it was split in the loins of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the common grandfather of both Muḥammad and 'Alī. After that it was divided into two parts, Muḥammad's light being placed in the loins of his father 'Abd Allāh, and 'Alī's in those of Abū Ṭālib.[94] From 'Alī this light was transmitted to the imams who followed him. This hereditary

doctrine of *nūr Muḥammad* which, as part of the ancestral sperm, had come to him not from Muḥammad but from his father Abū Ṭālib, is different from *nūr Allāh* (Divine Light) which is regarded as a part of the divine spirit which passed from Muḥammad to 'Alī at the former's death. This light, too, in Uri Rubin's view, is transmitted through a universal line of carriers and is said to have reached Muḥammad from Adam through the Judaeo–Christian prophets, who apparently had no relation to Muḥammad. The light is said to have reached Muḥammad from Ismā'īl (Ishmael) not through his Arab progenitors – the posterity of Ishmael – but through the Judaeo–Christian prophets of Banū Isrā'īl to whom the light was transferred from Ishmael via his brother, Isaac. According to Rubin, this view is parallel to the Ismaili doctrine of the cyclical manifestation of '*aql* through the *nāṭiqs*.[95]

Rajkowski believes that this tradition on light, and other similar traditions, may indicate that Manichaean ideas were being introduced in the Shī'ī doctrine by extremists and semi-extremists, among whom he includes Jābir al-Ju'fī.[96] There is, perhaps, an element of truth in Rajkowski's view, but one must not forget that the doctrine of light in embryonic form is contained in the Qur'ān itself.[97] Muḥammad himself is described in the Qur'ān as *Sirāj Munīr* (an 'illuminating lamp'). It thus appears that the doctrine of *nūr Allāh*, according to which the Prophet and the imams possess a divine heritage and a sanctified light which they have inherited from the preceding prophets, is different from the doctrine of *nūr Muḥammad* which regards the prophetic light of the Prophet and the imams as coming from the Prophet's Arab ancestors.

It is possible that the imam is a recipient of not only *nūr Allāh* which, as an independent spiritual entity, is entrusted to the next imam by *naṣṣ* only at the last moment of the previous imam's life, but also of *nūr Muḥammad*, which, as part of the ancestral sperm, is confined to the genealogical line of the imam's progenitors. The *nūr Muḥammad* makes the imam, who is *ṣāmit* (silent) until such time as he receives the *nūr Allāh* when he becomes *nāṭiq* (speaking). In other words, *nūr*

Muḥammad gives the recipient the potential to become an imam, but the actuality appears only when he receives *nūr Allāh* by means of *naṣṣ* from the previous imam.

What we have here are two symbols. The first is the symbol of prophecy (*nūr Allāh*) which is shared by both prophets and imams. The second is the symbol of succession (*nūr Muḥammad*), which is also related to the divine and which is an integral aspect of the substance connecting Adam to Muḥammad and Muḥammad to the imams. This, of course, is a light that may be latent, which did not, for example, shine in the person of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib or Hāshim, but yet distinguished both from the people around them. Whether or not they were aware of it, they were from a special family. The fact that the two images of light are used here does not mean that they are in opposition to each other; on the contrary, they are in harmony, a harmony such as that evoked by the famous words of the 'verse of light' in the Qur'ān: 'Light upon Light.' (24:35) In other words *nūr Allāh* embraces all men chosen by God, but *nūr Muḥammad* is limited to the direct line of Adam through Muḥammad down to the line of the *ahl al-bayt*.

The *nūr* and *'ilm* which the imam is meant to possess by virtue of *naṣṣ* renders him *ma'ṣūm*, or protected from error and sin. As noted earlier, al-Bāqir based this concept on his interpretation of the Qur'ānic verse 33:33. The question to be asked here is whether the concept of infallibility or impeccability (*'iṣma*) applies only to religious matters, or whether it also covers actions flowing from human nature? Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān does not specify whether the imam's impeccability extends to the religious realm only or includes human actions as well. Al-Kirmānī does not offer an express view either, but implies a wider scope of infallibility when he says, 'the souls of prophets and legatees and the imams are not similar to the souls of these lesser *ḥudūd* (grades), who being inferior to them are not impeccable and are amenable (*tastaḥīl*) to good and evil.'[98] However, the author of *al-Majālis al-mustanṣiriyya* claims that the imam is *ma'ṣum*, but that the *'iṣma* applies only to divine and religious matters, not to those of the human realm.[99]

The legal and political implications of this doctrine are clear. The imam has absolute power over the community and, since he is appointed by God and is infallible, the community who are not infallible can neither appoint him nor elect him.[100] Thus there is no room for the principle of *ijmā'* (consensus) in al-Bāqir's theory of the imamate.

Another aspect of the imamate which has come down to us from al-Bāqir's traditions is the concept of *ḥujja* (guarantor).[101] In his view, from the time of Adam's death there has always been an imam to guide mankind towards Allāh who is His guarantor (*ḥujja*) over His worshippers. The world, al-Bāqir maintains, cannot exist even for a moment without the imam who is the *ḥujja* of God. If the imam were to be taken away from the earth even for an hour, the earth would swallow up its inhabitants just as the sea swallows its people. 'We [the imams] are,' al-Bāqir says, 'the *ḥujja* (guarantor) of God and His Gate. We are the tongue as well as the face of God; we are the eyes of God [guarding] His creation and we are the responsible guardians (*wulāt al-amr*) of God on earth.'[102] Al-Bāqir adds that God is worshipped through the imams and it is through them that God is known and declared as One.

These qualities of the imam make him *afḍal al-nās*, or the best among mankind. It was in this manner that al-Bāqir tried to establish his position as the imam, declaring himself to be the representative of God upon earth and the divinely-inspired interpreter of His words. His success in this respect can be measured from two angles – firstly from the number of followers he was able to attract, and secondly from the success of his own son and successor al-Ṣādiq who assimilated and elaborated his views.

CHAPTER FIVE

Al-Bāqir's Views on Some Key Theological Issues

The theological discussions resulting from the *fitna*[1] had become more intense by the time of al-Bāqir. People had begun to question the validity of the imamate and the 'status of the believer' which the imam must possess. This led to questions about *imān* and *islām* and whether *'amal* (action/deed) was a necessary part of *imān* and a requirement for a person to be called a Muslim. These questions, in turn, raised the problem of man's responsibility or lack of responsibility and, as parallel considerations arose, questions about the nature of the Qur'ān (created or uncreated) and the emphasis laid upon the divine attributes of the Word.

These issues brought in their wake the more general problem of divine attributes, the modes of their existence and their relationship with the unity of the divine essence. In the course of time, many more issues were raised and debated; however, at this early period, the essential themes which were later to constitute the religious science of theology or *kalām* had already emerged. In the following pages, an attempt will be made to present al-Bāqir's views on some of the key issues that were being broadly debated during his lifetime.

Īmān (Faith)

One of the essential questions that was discussed at this early period, and upon which the various schools were divided, was *īmān*. A number of related questions were raised such as the distinction between *īmān* and *islām*, 'faith' and 'submission', and their connection. Another related issue was whether there were degrees of faith. Al-Bāqir, basing his views on the Qur'ānic verse 49:14 – 'The Bedouins say: "we believe". Say: you do not believe; rather say, "we have accepted Islam (*aslamnā*). Faith has not yet entered your heart."' – made a clear distinction between *īmān* and *islām*. For him *īmān* included *islām*, but *islām* did not necessarily encompass *īmān*.[2] A similar exposition of al-Bāqir's views is to be found in the *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, where al-Bāqir symbolises *islām* and *īmān* by drawing two concentric circles on his palm; the outer as *islām* and the inner as *īmān* because that, he said, was realising belief in the heart. Therefore, in al-Bāqir's view, a *mu'min* is automatically a *muslim*, but a *muslim* is not necessarily a *mu'min*.[3]

Al-Bāqir elaborated the distinction further when asked whether he who had entered *islām* had entered *īmān*. He replied in the negative, but added that the person had come out of *kufr* (unbelief) and was associated with *īmān* (*qad udifu ilā al-īmān*). Giving the example of the Ka'ba and the Masjid al-Ḥarām, al-Bāqir then asked the questioner whether, if he had seen a person in the mosque, he would testify that he had seen him in the Ka'ba? The questioner replied that he would not. Al-Bāqir then asked whether, if he had seen a person in the Ka'ba, he would be able to ascertain that he had been in the mosque. The questioner said: 'Yes.' Al-Bāqir then told him that it was the same with *īmān* and *islām*.[4]

Further details of the difference between *īmān* and *islam* can be deduced from yet another question put to al-Bāqir. When asked if he who witnesses that there is no God but God, and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God, was a believer, al-Bāqir replied: 'Then what about the duties imposed by God?'[5] As noted earlier, according to al-Bāqir there were seven such

duties, but *walāya* was the foremost around which all others revolved. Thus, for al-Bāqir, true *īmān* is directly related to the *walāya* of the imams; *īmān* emerges from belief in the imam. According to him *īmān*, as distinct from *islām*, is belief in the prophets, messengers and imams of God with complete obedience to the imam of the time.[6] Al-Bāqir's views thus tend to reflect the idea that *īmān* is both word (*qawl*) and deed/action (*'amal*).[7] According to a definition given by his son Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, *īmān* is *qawl bi al-lisān* (words with the tongue), inner conviction (*taṣdīq bi al-janān*) and works/actions in accordance with the pillars imposed by God (*wa a'māl bi al-arkān*).[8]

Abū Ḥanīfa, a younger contemporary of al-Bāqir, held different views. According to article 1 of the *waṣiyya* ascribed to Abū Ḥanīfa: 'Faith is confession (*iqrār*) by the tongue, internal conviction (*taṣdīq bi al-janān*) and knowledge of the heart (*wa ma'rifa bi al-qalb*).' There is no mention of works in this definition. But according to the Khārijiyya, the Qadariyya and the Mu'tazila, works or actions are an integral part of faith, and are even seen as constituting faith itself.[9] The Murji'a, on the other hand, regarded works as irrelevant to faith, which implied that faith had a degree of immutability and could not be impaired by sin.[10]

Al-Bāqir vehemently opposed these Murji'ite views. According to Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, he is reported to have said that 'the Murji'a had changed the *Sunna* of Allāh, both externally and internally' and that 'they are the Jews of this community whose enmity towards us is more severe than that of the Christians and the Jews.'[11] In the political field, such an attitude meant that the Murji'a were prepared to accept temporal rulers even when their behaviour was sinful in some respects. The implication was that riots, rebellions and uprisings against existing rulers were neither necessary nor desirable. An interesting example of this is the struggle of the Murji'a during the Umayyad period for the equality of the *mawālī*. Initially, according to evidence cited by Madelung, the Murji'a reaction to the new 'Abbāsid movement was extremely negative.[12] Gradually, however, the eastern Murji'a changed from a revolutionary

force working to overthrow the Umayyads to an official body backing the established 'Abbāsid rule.

Since the Murji'a believed in the 'postponement' of the decision about the grave sinner, they had to face the problem of defining *īmān* so that it corresponded to that which made a man a member of the community as a whole. This is what made them exclude works (*a'māl*) from faith (*imān*). Abū Ḥanīfa and his followers appear to have taken the same line; in fact al-Ash'arī in his *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*[13] considers the Ḥanafiyya to be a sect of the Murji'a. Al-Bāqir, on the other hand, believed that there were different grades among the *mu'minūn*. Explaining this further al-Bāqir's son, al-Ṣādiq, says that some believers are better than others, some pray more than others, some are more clear-sighted or discerning than others. According to al-Bāqir, the qualities of a *mu'min* should include:

> Reliance (*tawakkul*) on God; leaving the decision of affairs (*tafwīḍ*) to God; contentment (*riḍā*) with the decree (*qaḍā'*) of God, and Submission (*taslim*) to the command or will of God.[14]

He reported that on one occasion, whilst on a journey, the Prophet came across a group of people who told him that they were believers, whereupon the Prophet asked them what was the proof of their īmān and they gave the last three of the four qualities mentioned above.[15]

In al-Bāqir's view, *īmān* was built on four pillars: (i) patience (*ṣabr*); (ii) certainty (*yaqīn*); (iii) justice (*'adl*) and (iv) struggle (*jihād*). It is clear that, for him, a person's virtues are directly linked to his *īmān*. In another of his traditions al-Bāqir maintains that: 'The believer who is most perfect in *īmān* is the one who has the best character.'[16] Speaking of more specific virtues, he refers to one in particular, namely *ṣabr* (patience or patient endurance), which he says is like the head to the body. He who has no *ṣabr* has no *īmān*. He describes perfect *ṣabr* as that patience which precludes any complaint to the people.[17]

An aspect arising from the question of degrees of faith is the notion of whether *īmān* is fixed or whether, on the contrary,

īmān can increase or decrease with the comprehension of knowledge and improvement of deeds. This is what is meant by *īmān 'an 'ilm*, i.e., faith based on knowledge (religious knowledge). Unlike the Murji'a, al-Bāqir placed immense emphasis on the acquisition of *'ilm*, as seen in numerous traditions reported by him. However, in al-Bāqir's view, the acquisition of knowledge is not an end in itself but a means to an end. For him, it is not enough to acquire knowledge; it is important to act according to the knowledge acquired and to teach others what one has learnt.[18] Hence, by means of *'ilm* (knowledge), *'amal* (action) can be improved and if *'amal* is improved, then *imān* can increase and become stronger; in turn, a stronger *imān* deepens one's *'ilm* and further refines one's *'amal*. Thus, according to al-Bāqir, *'ilm*, *'amal*, and *īmān* are all interrelated.

Taqiyya

In al-Bāqir's view, the question of *taqiyya*,[19] or precautionary dissimulation, is directly related to that of *'ilm* and *imān*. Someone from Baṣra related to him al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī's claim that those who concealed knowledge would offend people in hell with their wind. Al-Bāqir replied that, if this were the case, then the believer from the Pharaoh's family would have been destroyed. He then went on to add, pointing to his chest, that 'Knowledge has remained hidden ever since God sent Noah, so let al-Ḥasan wander everywhere [lit. right and left] for, by God, no knowledge will be found except in here.'[20]

This incident suggests that the question of whether knowledge could be concealed or not – that is, whether it was permissible to observe *taqiyya* – was discussed during the time of al-Bāqir. The views expressed by al-Bāqir indicate the emphasis he laid on concealing knowledge, i.e., practising *taqiyya* with regard to knowledge. Al-Bāqir once asked someone how he would feel if he (al-Bāqir) asked a person who loved the *ahl al-bayt* to use precautionary disguise or dissimulation (*taqiyya*). The man replied: 'You know best.' Then al-Bāqir said: 'If he would adopt it [i.e. *taqiyya*] it would be better for him and he

would be greatly rewarded.' According to another version of this encounter he said: 'If he adopted it, he would be rewarded, and if he neglected it, he has sinned, by God.'[21]

The first version of the tradition suggests that it is preferable for someone to observe *taqiyya*, but the second implies that it is prescribed as a duty which it is a sin not to fulfil. According to his son al-Ṣâdiq, al-Bāqir also said that 'concealment is my religious practice as well as that of my ancestors. Whoever does not practise *taqiyya* has no real faith. He who divulges our secret (*amr*) is like one who rejects it.'[22] Here al-Bāqir is already putting forward the doctrine of *taqiyya* as a principle or as a necessary part of *īmān*. Once Zurāra b. A'yān came to al-Bāqir with an inquiry to which he gave an answer different from those he gave to two other people who raised the same question. When they left, Zurāra asked al-Bāqir why he had given different answers to two Shī'īs of 'Irāq. Al-Bāqir replied: 'That is better for us and will be more conducive to our and your survival, for if you all were to agree upon one thing then people would turn against us, and this would diminish [the prospects of] our and your survival.'[23]

The use of *taqiyya* was probably essential to al-Bāqir's teaching, for he insisted on the division of *'ilm* into *ẓāhir* (exoteric) and *bāṭin* (esoteric). In this connection, al-Bāqir's reply to Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī, who asked why he gave different answers to the same Qur'ānic problem at different times, is significant.[24] The Qur'ān, he explained, has an inner meaning (*baṭn*) and the inner meaning has yet another inner meaning; and the Qur'ān has an outer meaning (*ẓahr*) which in the same way has another outer meaning. Al-Bāqir added that nothing could be further from men's intellect than the *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān, for the beginning of an *āya* could be about one thing while the end may be about another. The words are closely connected (*muttaṣil*) in meaning, yet applied (*munṣarif*) in various ways.

The question of *taqiyya* was, in political terms, closely linked to the discussion of *al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahī 'an al-munkar*, that is 'enjoining good and prohibiting evil'. The question raised in this connection was how far it was a duty for Muslims

to see that others did what is right and refrained from wrong. Some believed that the duty of 'enjoining good and prohibiting evil' should be carried out by force if necessary. The Mu'tazila adopted this view, believing that if there was a reasonable chance of raising opposition to a tyrant, he must be opposed even if that meant someone had to be killed in the process. Al-Bāqir's views were not the same as those of his contemporaries who used this doctrine to advocate revolution, at least in the circumstances of the day. For, as is known, he did not approve of armed revolt and in fact had dissuaded his half-brother, Zayd b. 'Alī, from adopting such a course. This could have been under *taqiyya* for, according to one tradition,[25] while he did believe in taking up the sword if necessary, the time in which he lived was not right for armed rebellion.

Another sphere in which al-Bāqir appears to have used *taqiyya* is over the question of the two caliphs Abū Bakr and 'Umar. According to Ibn Sa'd,[26] al-Bāqir is reported to have called them 'leaders of right guidance' and said that 'Alī did not want to contravene their practice. This is, of course, contrary to reports in al-Ṭabarī, where 'Alī refuses to follow the *sīra*, that is the practice of the two caliphs.[27] However, al-Bāqir's conviction that the Prophet had expressly designated 'Alī as his successor must have meant to him that their succession was lacking the legitimacy which 'Alī alone possessed. Some Kūfans believed that al-Bāqir concealed his real opinion, using *taqiyya*.[28] So concerned was al-Bāqir about the situation, that the doctrine was made a principle in order to ensure the safety of the Shī'a.[29]

However, *taqiyya* was never unfamiliar to Islam, even in its early phases. The following Qur'ānic verse, 16:106, justifies *taqiyya* under conditions of severe constraint:

> Whoever disbelieves in God after he has believed – excepting him who has been compelled, and his heart is still at rest in his belief – but whosoever's breast is expanded in unbelief, upon them shall rest anger from God, and there awaits them a mighty chastisement.[30]

It is unanimously agreed that this verse referred to 'Ammār b. Yāsir, the famous companion of the Prophet who was subjected to severe torture by unbelievers from the Quraysh to the point where he verbally renounced Islam. When accused by some Muslims of disbelief, the Prophet said, 'No! 'Ammār is full of faith from head to foot. Faith has been mixed with his flesh and blood.' When 'Ammār in fact came to the Prophet weeping because of his forced renunciation, he was told, 'Why should you (cry)? If they repeat (their torture), repeat what you have told them.'[31]

Qaḍā' wa Qadar

During the Umayyad period, there was much discussion of the question of *qaḍā' wa qadar* (decree and power) which is related to the previously discussed topic of *īmān*. Some argued that, since God determined everything, they could not help committing sins.[32] This, in a way, was a justification of moral complacency which was not purely academic, but linked to political concerns. For such an attitude could mean that the Umayyad regime was ordained by God and was therefore not to be opposed. In fact there is adequate evidence to suggest that the Umayyads defended and justified their rule on the basis of such predestinarian ideas.[33] These theological arguments provoked a reaction from those who were accustomed to thinking of man as a responsible agent. Those who held this doctrine of free will came to be known, somewhat illogically, as Qadariyya.[34] One group believed that *ḥasanāt* (noble actions) and *khayr* (goodness) are from God, while wickedness and base actions are from men.

According to al-Bāqir, 'in one of His scriptures', God said 'I have created both, good and evil; thus blessed are those from whose hands is performed good and woe upon those through whom evil is performed, and woe also to those who say: "how is this and how is that?"'

Following from this, al-Bāqir said:

> Allāh the Almighty and Exalted was there [when] nothing was there except Him. He always knew what will be, and His knowledge of a thing before it comes into existence is like His knowledge of it after it comes into being.[35]

However, elsewhere al-Bāqir maintains that 'God is too merciful to force His creatures to sin and then to punish them, and He is too mighty than that he should will a thing that would not transpire.'[36]

When asked whether there was a third position in between *jabr* and *qadar*, al-Bāqir replied that there was and that it was wider than the distance between the sky and the earth. When his son al-Ṣādiq was asked about *jabr* and *qadar* he replied: 'There is no *jabr* and no *qadar* but there is a position between the two.' He then added that its truth is not known by anyone except the *'ālim*, or by him whom the *'ālim* has taught.[37] Al-Bāqir's views here demonstrate an intermediate position supporting neither determination nor free will in an exclusive manner.

Tawḥīd

There were three main areas of dispute which came under the topic of *tawḥīd* or 'unity of God': (i) the nature of the Qur'ān; (ii) the problem of God's attributes and (iii) the denial of any resemblance between God and His creation.

As far as the first problem is concerned, the point at issue was whether the Qur'ān, which all agreed to be the word of God (*kalām Allāh*), was created or uncreated. The view that it was uncreated perhaps originated as a result of many scholars claiming that events occurred by the *qadr* or determination of God.[38] The argument from some Muslims was partly that since certain historical events are mentioned in the Qur'ān, these must have been known eternally by God and were therefore pre-determined.[39] The reaction to this doctrine of uncreatedness, i.e. that the Qur'ān had appeared in time, was evaded by taking the Qur'ān as an expression of God's

knowledge.[40] Thus some defenders of human freedom insisted that the Qur'ān was created,[41] supporting their views by quoting such Qur'ānic verses as: 'We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān' (43:2). They asserted that the word *ja'alnā* 'We made' meant the same as 'We created'.

Al-Bāqir's views on the question concerned are not clearly discernible from his traditions as reported in the *Da'ā'im* or in *al-Kāfī*, except for one tradition which implies that the Qur'ān was created.[42] It says: 'God is separate from His creation and His creation is separate from Him; everything that is given a name is a thing which is created except God and He is the Creator of everything.' Since the Qur'ān is the name of the Book it would imply that it is created. However, according to al-Kashshī,[43] al-Bāqir is reported to have said that the Qur'ān is neither the Creator nor is it uncreated; it is the word of the Creator. This is supported by views attributed to al-Bāqir's father[44] as well as to his son.[45] Thus al-Bāqir seems to be proposing a midway position between the two opposing arguments.

The question of God's attributes is directly related to the doctrine of the createdness or uncreatedness of the Qur'ān, for the speech of God is an attribute of God. Therefore, a dispute also arose about the nature of the divine attributes. The Qur'ān describes God as Willing, Knowing, Decreeing, amongst other attributes. According to al-Asha'rī,[46] most of the Khārijiyya as well as many Murji'a and the Mu'tazila held that 'God is knowing, powerful and living through Himself (*bi-nafsihi*) not by knowledge, power and life,' and when they permit the phrase 'God has knowledge' to be used, it is only in the sense that He is Knowing.

When al-Bāqir was asked about the relationship of divine attributes to God, he is believed to have replied: 'There is nothing like God and nothing resembles Him. He has forever been the Knowing, the Hearing and the Seeing.' When asked if it was appropriate to worship the Compassionate, the Merciful, the Unique, the Absolute, he replied: 'Anyone who worships "the names" without the One named, is committing *shirk* (polytheism), is an infidel and a denier, and in fact does not worship

anything.' 'Rather,' al-Bāqir added, 'worship God, the One, the Unique, the Absolute who is called by these names without the names (themselves), for the names are only attributes by which He characterises Himself.'[47] For al-Bāqir, therefore, the attributes appear to be eternal but only as adjectives. They help believers to understand something about God but they are not to be confused with God.

When asked by 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Najrān whether it was proper to imagine God as something, al-Bāqir replied: 'Yes, but not as something bound by reason or any limitation.' He added:

> God is completely different to whatever you imagine; He neither resembles anything nor can imagination [ever] attain Him, for how could imagination ever attain Him while He is totally different to what is bound by reason and [also] different from what can be pictured in imagination? He can be imagined only as an entity beyond reason and beyond [any] limitation.[48]

A Khārijī once approached al-Bāqir and inquired if he had seen Allāh. Al-Bāqir replied:

> Although eyes do not see Him, yet the heart can see Him with the reality of faith.[49] He is neither known by analogy, nor is He felt by the senses, nor can He be likened to human beings. He is described by signs or the verses [of the Qur'ān] and known by symbols; he is not unjust in His judgements, that [verily] is Allāh, there is no God but He.[50]

Commenting on the Qur'ānic verse 'Vision attains him not, but He attains all vision', al-Bāqir said:

> The imagination of the heart is more accurate than the vision of the eyes; you may imagine Sind, Hind and other countries that you have never visited and seen with your eyes; but the imagination of the heart does not attain Him, then how could the eyes?[51]

Al-Bāqir is believed to have advised his followers to 'talk about the creation of Allāh but not to discuss Allāh Himself for the conversation will only create confusion for the speaker.'[52] When thinking of God, al-Bāqir is reported to have warned people to be careful. Thus God, in al-Bāqir's view, does not resemble anything and is beyond imagination and beyond limitation.[53] He cannot be seen with the naked eye but can be apprehended by the inner reality of faith and can be described by signs and symbols.

Al-Bāqir's theological ideas indicate the early stages of the discussion in which he took part and formed the basis of theological discussions that were to come later. The sources for these views are mainly traditions attributed to al-Bāqir in *al-Kāfi* and *al-Da'ā'im*. While both these collections of traditions were compiled long after his death, it is interesting to note that theological language which is identifiably later than his own is never attributed to him, nor are theological views that are clearly different from those of his time. It would therefore be justified to conclude that these traditions represent views actually held by al-Bāqir.

CHAPTER SIX

Al-Bāqir in Traditionist Circles

Non-Shīʿī Circles

This chapter will look at al-Bāqir's image outside his immediate Shīʿī following. The sources suggest that his reputation as a traditionist went far beyond those circles and groups that are identified with him.[1] He is unanimously esteemed in non-Shīʿī circles as one of the most trustworthy authorities on the traditions of the Prophet, bearing the quality of *thiqa* – the highest degree of trust bestowed by Muslim scholars on those who were deemed reliable, trustworthy and accurate in transmitting traditions. Al-Bāqir and his son al-Ṣādiq are included in Sunnī *isnāds* in works such as Mālik's *Muwaṭṭaʾ*,[2] al-Ṭabarī's *Taʾrīkh*[3] and *Tafsīr*, Ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad*[4] and al-Shāfiʿī's *Risāla*.[5]

The evidence suggests that al-Bāqir's position among his contemporaries was such that many scholars felt inferior to him; even the most eminent regarded him with awe and reverence on account of his outstanding knowledge. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAṭāʾ al-Makkī is reported to have said that he had never seen scholars feel so small in the presence of anyone as they felt before Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn (al-Bāqir). To illustrate the point he added that even the famous traditionist al-Ḥakam b. ʿUtayba (d. 113/731), despite his age and eminence, behaved before Abū Jaʿfar as though he were a pupil in the presence of a teacher.[6]

Another famous non-Shīʿī scholar, Muḥammad b. al-Munkadir, is reported to have said that he had not seen anyone surpass ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn until he encountered his son Muḥammad b. ʿAlī, namely al-Bāqir.[7] The encounter itself is not documented in Ibn Ḥajar's *Tahdhīb*, but according to the Shīʿī sources he was in one of the suburbs of Medina on an extremely hot day when he came across al-Bāqir leaning on two of his servant boys.[8] Muḥammad b. al-Munkadir thought: 'Here is a venerable leader of the Quraysh out at this time, seeking worldly advantage in these circumstances. Let me warn him.' Approaching al-Bāqir, he greeted him. Al-Bāqir, sweating profusely, returned his greetings angrily. Muḥammad al-Munkadir said: 'May God reform you, O venerable leader of the Quraysh, out at this time seeking worldly advantage in these circumstances. [What would you do] if death were to come upon you while you were in this condition?' Al-Bāqir took his hands from his two servant boys, held himself up and said:

> By God, if death came upon me while I was in this condition, it would come upon me while I am [fulfilling] an act of obedience to God, by which I make myself withdraw from you and from the [rest of the] people. I would only fear death if it came upon me while I was performing an act of disobedience against God.

Muḥammad b. al-Munkadir bashfully replied: 'May God have mercy on you, I intended to warn you but you have in fact warned me.'

In spite of all the credit given to al-Bāqir in non-Shīʿī literature, traditions reported by him do not feature very prominently in the surviving Sunnī *ḥadīth* literature. Nor do the few traditions that appear in the extant Sunnī literature tend to support his authority as an eminent traditionist, as described by the biographical dictionaries. It is true that not all traditionists described as prominent have numerous traditions reported in their names. Yet one cannot help being surprised in al-Bāqir's case as he is generally acclaimed as *bāqir al-ʿilm* 'one who splits

open knowledge.'[9]

It is interesting to note that al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742), who narrated traditions from al-Bāqir and studied under al-Bāqir's father Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn,[10] features prominently in the surviving Sunnī literatures, while al-Bāqir, from whom even Mālik (97–179/716–795) and Abū Ḥanīfa (81–150/700–767) reported, has been set aside with only a few traditions to his credit. Obviously, one has to take into account the fact that the surviving literature is not in any way comprehensive. Further, the text (*matn*) of the traditions may have been available to the reporters through many *isnāds* (chains of transmission). Therefore, it is quite probable that one *isnād* has been inserted to the exclusion of others. Yet the question of whether this was purely coincidental or a deliberate matter of preference, a process of conscious 'picking and choosing', remains. The latter possibility cannot be totally ignored, for even the most objective writer or reporter would have had his own attitudes, tendencies, reservations and constraints. A brief look at the background of the period will throw some light on this point.

As is known, *ḥadīth* literature had a troubled existence during its formative period and those who occupied themselves with collecting and narrating traditions soon discovered that they had to reckon with severe state censorship. Al-Ṭabarī,[11] for example, mentions that Muʿāwiya I had ordered the public condemnation and cursing of ʿAlī and his supporters, while the glory of the family of ʿUthmān was to be extolled. In such circumstances, and until the Umayyad power was sapped, it was hardly possible for anyone to sympathise publicly with the house of ʿAlī.

However, it must be remarked that the extant *ḥadīth* literature does not date as far back as the Umayyad caliphate, although some of the traditions were handed down from that era. One of the earliest extant works is the *Muwaṭṭaʾ* whose writer, Mālik b. Anas,[12] although born during that period, lived the last forty-five years of his life, the years of his literary activity, under the aegis of the ʿAbbāsids. An exception to this is the *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) which has not been

expurgated so as to please the 'Abbāsids. It includes traditions of obviously Syrian origin that are favourable to the Umayyads as well as a great many exceedingly detailed records that support the claims of the Shī'īs, including the tradition of Ghadīr Khumm.

It is safe to assume that a political upheaval of the kind that occurred during this change of dynasties would have been an influential factor in determining what traditions were to be circulated and in whose names they were to be reported. Despite the fact that only a few traditions in al-Bāqir's name are reported in the extant Sunnī literature, Ibn Ḥajar (d. 852) gives a long list of names from whom al-Bāqir has reported traditions and to whom he has in turn transmitted them. These names include, besides his family, the companions or *aṣḥāb* who were contemporary with Muḥammad, for instance, Samura b. Jundub, Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh, Abū Ḥurayra, 'Ā'isha and others. However, if one compares their dates of death with al-Bāqir's date of birth, one soon realises that Abū Ḥurayra and 'Ā'isha died long before al-Bāqir was born. Furthermore, al-Bāqir was a mere infant at the time of the death of Samura and his paternal grandfather al-Ḥusayn, while his maternal grandfather al-Ḥasan died long before he was born. It is for this reason that Ibn Ḥajar[13] mentions a report saying that only the traditions of al-Bāqir from Ibn 'Abbās,[14] Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh and 'Abd Allāh b. Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib are *marfū'*, meaning traceable directly to the Prophet, while what he has narrated from other companions (although the list includes some *tābi'ūn* i.e. the first generation after the Prophet as well as *tābi'u al-tābi'ūn* i.e. the second generation after the Prophet) are all *mursal*, that is traditions that are handed down by a *tābi'* about the Prophet for which an intermediary link is missing.

The few traditions of al-Bāqir found in some of the Sunnī sources reveal that, besides narrating traditions from his own immediate family, the only outsider on whose authority al-Bāqir reports the traditions is Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī.[15] He is the sole companion of the Prophet who lived until al-Bāqir reached the age of maturity. The other point to emerge from

these few traditions is al-Bāqir's own standing as a traditionist, for all three sources include *isnāds* that stop at al-Bāqir. In the *Muwaṭṭa'*,[16] out of eight traditions, the first two terminate at al-Bāqir as follows: Mālik … Ja'far … his father (al-Bāqir), while the other four[17] add that al-Bāqir heard it from Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh, and the last two[18] maintain that he heard it from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. This clearly indicates the authority of al-Bāqir as a traditionist; in fact, it gives us an idea of the family's standing as a source of authority. It must be mentioned, however, that Mālik was not a traditionist and his interest in collecting traditions lay mainly in their impact upon jurisprudence. Of the two traditions found in al-Shāfi'ī's *Risāla*,[19] one terminates at al-Bāqir while the other is reported from Jābir. In the *Musnad* of Ibn Ḥanbal too there are some *isnāds* which terminate at al-Bāqir,[20] while in others he reports from his father 'Alī, Zayn al-'Ābidīn.[21]

The fact that the Sunnī sources include in their works traditions with *isnāds* that stop at al-Bāqir suggests that he is quoted as a direct authority. This means that either his traditions are regarded as *marfū'* i.e. traceable to the Prophet, or that al-Bāqir was speaking on his own authority as an imam. The latter is not altogether impossible, bearing in mind his views on the imamate, but whether the Sunnī traditionists mentioned him in this capacity is debatable. For, as is known,[22] when the Medinans began accusing al-Bāqir of transmitting *ḥadīth* on the authority of the Prophet, whom he had never seen, the name of Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh was inserted between him and that of the Prophet to make the traditions more acceptable.[23] This does not, of course, mean that al-Bāqir did not report any traditions from Jābir; what it does suggest is that although al-Bāqir may have been saying things in his capacity as an imam from the Shī'ī point of view, the non-Shī'ī transmitters could not accept his authority as an imam and therefore the formal act of inserting Jābir's name had to be employed in some traditions.

Transmitters of al-Bāqir

Ibn Ḥajar gives a long list of those people who narrated traditions from al-Bāqir.[24] Many of them attained great fame and in turn formed their own study circles. In this way, al-Bāqir's traditions were handed down to posterity not only through his own progeny, but also through these scholars. They include, besides his son Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 148/765), scholars such as Abū Isḥāq al-Sabī'ī, 'Amr b. 'Abd Allāh (d. 128/745), al-A'rāj, (d. after 140/758), al-Zuhrī, Muḥammad b. Muslim Ibn Shihāb (d. 124/742), 'Amr b. Dīnār (d.c. 126/743–4), al-Awzā'ī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-'Amr (d. 157/774), Ibn Jurayj, 'Abd al-Malik (d. 150/767), al-A'mash, Sulaymān b. Miḥrān (d. 148/765), Makḥūl b. Rāshid (d. 115/733), Mu'ammar b. Yaḥyā b. Sāmsām.

Ibn Ḥajar's list does not appear to be complete, for al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1347)[25] includes more names such as Rabī'a al-Ra'y (d. 136/754) and Murra b. Khālid. Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī (d. 136/754)[26] adds the names of 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ (d. 114/732), Jābir al-Ju'fī (d. 128/745), Abān b. Taghlib (d. 141/759), and Layth b. Abī Salim/Sulaym. In fact Ibn Ḥajar himself, when ending the list of names, mentions 'and others', obviously implying he has not been able to include all of them. Moreover, when he deals with individual scholars, he mentions more people, such as Abū al-Jārūd Ziyād b. al-Mundhir and 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Bakr b. 'Amr b. Ḥazm, as reporters of traditions from al-Bāqir.

The names given in all the three works reveal some outstanding scholars who had formed their own study circles, such as al-Zuhrī, al-Awzā'ī, Ibn Jurayj, al-A'mash, Makḥūl and others. Al-Zuhrī attained great fame not only for his share in collecting traditions,[27] but also as the author of many other works, such as the famous *Tanzīl al-Qur'ān* and the *Mansūkh al-Qur'ān*. These two works have come down to us in a single manuscript dated 653/1255.[28] Makḥūl, the Syrian jurist who narrated traditions from al-Bāqir, collected prophetic traditions and a number of legal decisions based on the rulings of the

companions in a book known as the *Kitāb al-sunan*.[29] The traditions narrated by 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Hurmuz al-A'rāj, who also reported from al-Bāqir, were collected by Abū al-Zinād (d. 131/749) in a work entitled *Kitāb mā rawāhu al-A'rāj*.[30] 'Abd al-Malik b. 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Jurayj (d. 150/767) who compiled the *Kitāb al-sunan*,[31] was also a transmitter of al-Bāqir's. Another transmitter who was highly esteemed was 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Amr al-Awzā'ī.[32] He was Syrian in origin and wrote a work called *Kitāb al-sunan fī al-fiqh*[33] and was the founder of a legal school.

Al-Bāqir's reports in al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rīkh* reveal a few more of his narrators such as Isḥāq b. 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Farwa,[34] Muḥammad b. Isḥāq,[35] 'Ammār al-Duhnī[36] and 'Uqba b. Bashīr al-Asadī.[37]

However, it must be borne in mind that a number of the names cited in the various lists of reporters were actually al-Bāqir's colleagues rather than his narrators, although they may have reported traditions from him at times. For instance, scholars like al-Zuhrī and 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ, although included in his list of transmitters by non-Shī'ī writers, were his contemporaries. They could, in fact, be regarded as transmitters of al-Bāqir's father, 'Alī, Zayn al-'Ābidīn. Al-Zuhrī, as pointed out earlier, was definitely a student of Zayn al-'Ābidīn, while 'Aṭā' is believed to have been his disciple.[38] Given that the two men were very close, this might be a later Shī'ī interpretation. 'Aṭā' himself was a rather prestigious scholar and his knowledge of the rites of the pilgrimage, a subject on which al-Bāqir himself was an expert, was such that al-Bāqir is believed to have said of him: 'No one remains today who is more learned than 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ in respect of the *manāsik* (rites) of *ḥajj*.'[39]

Al-Bāqir was the contemporary of some of the most outstanding and distinguished scholars in the Islamic empire. Although each centre could boast giant figures, such as al-Zuhrī in Medina, 'Aṭā' b. Abī Rabāḥ in Mecca, Ibn Ḥammād and Shā'bī in Kūfa, Ibn Sīrīn and Qatāda in Baṣra and Makḥūl in Syria, the number of scholars in Medina far exceeded those in other cities. This does not necessarily mean that the Medinese were

better than their counterparts, but it does show the degree of intellectual activity that prevailed in the city. This, in turn, highlights the background against which al-Bāqir grew up and the circle in which he mixed. His contact with scholars was by no means limited to those of Medina for, as mentioned earlier, he had acquaintances as well as associates, transmitters and disciples in Mecca, Kūfa, Baṣra as well as in Syria and Yemen.

Al-Bāqir was a younger contemporary of some of the 'seven lawyers of Medina': Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib, ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr, Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUtba, Khārija b. Zayd b. Thābit, Sulaymān b. Yasār and Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr who was al-Bāqir's father-in-law. He was also an older contemporary of scholars such as Mālik b. Anas, Ibn ʿUyayna, Ibn Abī Laylā, Abū Ḥanīfa, Sufyān al-Thawrī and al-Awzāʿī. Al-Bāqir stood as the equal, if not the superior of these eminent scholars. In fact, according to some scholars, he was not only viewed as one of the many distinguished scholars of his age, but one who stood head and shoulders above them all.

The Shīʿī Circle

For the Shīʿa, al-Bāqir's image is totally different for two reasons: first, because he was one of the imams and, second, because of the structural difference between Shīʿī and Sunnī *ḥadīth*. The Shīʿī *ḥadīth* differs mainly on the source of authority in Islam after the death of the Prophet. The Sunnīs assign the primary role of transmitting traditions to the companions of the Prophet and so a Sunnī *isnād* will, as a rule, go back to a companion who transmits from the Prophet. But Shīʿī traditions are mainly a record of statements made by the Prophet or by an imam and transmitted to a later generation by the disciples of each imam. This, in the Shīʿī view, is because the companions are capable of error and therefore cannot claim to possess absolutely true knowledge and infallibly correct judgment, while the imams, in whom ultimate religious authority is vested, are by their very nature, divinely protected from sin

and error (*maʿṣūm*). Moreover, the Shīʿa argue that the companions could not serve as trustworthy transmitters because most, if not all, had acquiesced in, or even actively supported, the rule of the first three caliphs.

This brief outline of the structural difference between Shīʿī and Sunnī *ḥadīth* will help us to a better appreciation of al-Bāqir's image from a Shīʿī point of view. Since Shīʿī traditions are mainly the sayings of the Prophet or the imams, and since the Shīʿa believe that the Prophet and the imams are infallible, it is clear that their authority is final and unquestionable. Because al-Bāqir was one of the Shīʿī imams, his authority is absolute and indisputable from the Shīʿī point of view. Yet account must be taken of the different attitudes and tendencies, reflected in some of the large number of Shīʿī *ḥadīth*, of the various disciples who transmitted from him.

It is worth noting that, although the term Shīʿī is used here, the reference is to Ithnāʿasharī and Ismaili literature, since the Zaydī approach is more akin to the Sunnī. Nevertheless, it is revealing that when al-Bāqir is quoted in some Zaydī traditions, he is referred to as a direct authority and his traditions are regarded as *marfūʿ*, i.e., traceable to the Prophet.[40] The Jārūdiyya branch of the Zaydiyya go as far as believing that every descendant of the Prophet, young or old, is equal in knowledge, even if the individual concerned is still in his cradle; 'knowledge grew in their hearts just as rain makes the cultivated land [just as truffles and grass] grow.'[41] It is interesting to note that some of the sayings of al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq found in the Sunnī sources also have family *isnāds*, as mentioned earlier.

Shīʿī sources indicate that al-Bāqir was the most learned man of his time as well as the greatest jurist.[42] Other jurists of the *khawāṣṣ* (Shīʿa) and the *awāmm* (non-Shīʿa) reported from him the *ẓāhir* (external knowledge) concerning *ḥalāl* (what is permissible) and *ḥarām* (what is forbidden).[43] He was called 'Bāqir al-ʿIlm', says al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, because he was the first among the imams of the Prophet's family to split open knowledge and disclose it. This was possible for him, according to al-Nuʿmān, because his times were relatively congenial and the ruling

dynasty, the Umayyads, had adopted a more lenient approach in the later phase of their rule.

In his *Kitāb al-manāqib*, al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān says that al-Bāqir was given his title because he was the first to disclose knowledge and classify it. The learned reporters of the Shī'a, as well as the non-Shī'a who specialised in the question of precedence in Islam (*sibāq*), and those who dealt with *'ilm* and *ḥadīth*, borrowed and transmitted knowledge from him. He was regarded by these scholars as a model and they held him in the highest esteem. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān further maintains that al-Bāqir's reputation for reliability was such that a tradition that was technically *maqṭū'* ('interrupted' or 'broken'), was regarded as *mawṣūl*, that is linked, and was mentioned as *marfū'*, traceable to the Prophet, when reported by him.[44]

This passage from al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān clearly depicts al-Bāqir's image in the Shī'a world and the status that he had attained outside his own group. Undoubtedly, he was a prominent traditionist and the fact that the 'interrupted' or 'broken' traditions were regarded as 'linked' and traceable to the Prophet when they came from him speaks for itself so far as his esteem and his image among the Shī'ī is concerned.[45] It is also worth noting that, in the author's view, the farewell pilgrimage has been reported fully only by al-Bāqir who asked Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh about it. The latter, who is believed to have accompanied the Prophet, informed al-Bāqir about things that the Prophet did from the time he left Medina until the completion of the pilgrimage.

Al-Bāqir is believed to have recounted reports about the beginnings of history (*mubtadā'*)[46] and stories of the Prophet. The accounts of the campaigns of the Prophet (*maghāzī*) were also written on his authority.

> People followed the practices of the Prophet (*sunan*) on his authority and relied on him with regard to the rites of the pilgrimage which he reported on the authority of the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his family.[47]

Many Muslim scholars and jurists transmitted the principal features of religion (*ma'ālim*) on al-Bāqir's authority. He in fact became a touchstone of knowledge even in his own family, for he surpassed them all by his outstanding merit (*faḍl*) in traditional knowledge (*'ilm*), asceticism and leadership.[48] His fame travelled so far and wide that proverbs were coined about him and verses were written to describe him. For example, the poet, al-Quraẓī composed these lines in his praise:

> O, (You) who split open knowledge
> making it available to the people of piety
> And the best of those who seek to
> answer the call of the Exalted.[49]

Mālik b. A'yān al-Juhanī is even more generous:

> When people seek knowledge of the Qur'ān,
> the Quraysh rely upon him,
> If someone asks who is the son of the daughter of the Prophet,
> I realise that for that there are wide branches [i.e. many descendants].
> [They are like] stars that provide light for the night travellers,
> [They are like] mountains that bequeath vast knowledge.[50]

The traditions that have come down to us from al-Bāqir in Shī'ī sources of all three persuasions, Zaydī, Ithnā'asharī and Ismaili,[51] cover a vast spectrum, ranging from problems of the material world to questions concerning the spiritual life. Due to the nature of their content, these sayings have influenced nearly every branch of Shī'ī learning. After the Qur'ān, al-Bāqir's traditions, and those of his son and successor, al-Ṣādiq, form the backbone of Shī'ī jurisprudence (*fiqh*). Shī'ī theology (*kalām*) would be inexplicable and incomprehensible without them. His traditions were handed down to posterity by al-Ṣādiq, by his other sons and relations, as well as by his associates and disciples who were, from what can be gathered in the extant Shī'ī sources, innumerable.[52]

Shī'ī Associates of al-Bāqir

This section attempts to look at individuals who appear to have been close associates of al-Bāqir. Not all the stories in the extant sources can be taken at face value. However, it is worth looking at some anecdotes which help us to paint a picture of certain individuals who may have been intimately involved with al-Bāqir. The task is rendered difficult not only because Shī'ī circles generally operated underground, out of necessity, but also because there were several competing Shī'ī organisations. A second difficulty arises from the fact that, because he was an eminent traditionist, numerous people, who were not necessarily his followers but who, nevertheless, have been mentioned among his associates by some sources, recounted traditions from al-Bāqir. Thus, it is not easy to determine who were merely his transmitters and who were his committed followers. Furthermore, there were some who were sympathetic with the 'Alid cause but were not necessarily Shī'ī.

Al-Bāqir himself resided in Medina, and although he did have a few followers there as well as in Mecca, Baṣra and Syria, the sources suggest that the bulk of his followers were Kūfans. For the sake of brevity, only those of his followers who attained fame and were in some ways connected with enhancing al-Bāqir's position will be mentioned.

Kūfa

The chief representative of the imam in Kūfa was Abū 'Abd Allāh Jābir b. Yazīd b. al-Ḥārith al-Ju'fī (d. 128/745–6).[53] Views regarding his merit as a traditionist differ considerably but some authorities maintain, among them Sufyān al-Thawrī,[54] that he was 'truthful' (*ṣādiq*) and had the quality of 'reliability' (*thiqa*) as a traditionist and that only his transmitters, 'Amr b. Shamir al-Ju'fī,[55] Mufaḍḍal b. Ṣāliḥ al-Asadī,[56] and Munakhkhal b. Jamīl al-Asadī, *bayyā' al-jawarī* (a seller of slave girls)[57] were liars who introduced spurious traditions. Whatever his status as a traditionist outside the Shī'ī circle, there is little doubt that among

Shī'ī traditionists he was a striking personality and was considered to be an enthusiastic follower of al-Bāqir.

Jābir extolled the virtues of the *ahl al-bayt* and his devotion to al-Bāqir can be ascertained from the way in which he addressed him – 'The trustee of the trustees and inheritor of the knowledge of the prophets' (*waṣī al-awṣīyā' wa wārith 'ilm al-anbīyā'*).[58] He claimed to have witnessed miracles of the imam and is believed to have been recognised as the *bāb* (gate) of al-Bāqir[59] who, it is reported, related to him seventy secret traditions.[60] It is also believed that Jābir confessed before al-Bāqir that the secrets which the imam had imparted to him at times stirred him so much that something like madness overtook him. Al-Bāqir is reported to have said to him, 'when you feel like that, go into the desert (lit. the mountain), dig a hole and put your head into it.'[61] Some were either impatient regarding traditions related by Jābir or considered him to be a madman. However, this reputation for madness was one day to save him from serious trouble when the caliph Hishām ordered him to be sent to Damascus for an enquiry into his activities and people testified before the Amīr that he was insane.[62] Despite all his assertions, the Shī'a do not reject him as a *ghālī*[63] (one who exaggerates), perhaps because he remained faithful to the imam in the conflict with al-Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-'Ijlī whom he reviled and cursed.[64]

Jābir is quoted as the transmitter of some traditions in the *Umm al-kitāb* which is reputed to contain al-Bāqir's answers to the different questions asked by the followers.[65] Jābir is also the main narrator of al-Bāqir in *Risālat al-Ju'fī* which is believed to contain Jābir's view of Ismaili doctrines.[66] It is difficult to determine whether Jābir really did narrate all the traditions attributed to him from al-Bāqir, or whether some or many were later foisted upon him.[67]

Abān b. Taghlib (d. 141/758) was another associate of al-Bāqir. He was an important and outstanding jurist–traditionist of his time. Formerly an associate of Zayn al-'Ābidīn, he lived long enough to narrate traditions even from al-Bāqir's son al-Ṣādiq. Al-Bāqir is reported to have said to Abān:

> Sit in the mosque of Kūfa and give legal judgments to the people. Indeed, I would like to see among my Shī'a, people like you.[68]

Abān's reputation for learning was high, and by the time of al-Ṣādiq's imamate it had attained such a degree that, whenever he visited Medina, people would give way to him and allow him to use the column on which the Prophet used to lean in the mosque.

In due course, al-Bāqir was able to attract three of the previous pupils of al-Ḥakam b. 'Utayba – Abū al-Ḥasan b. A'yān b. Sunsan, Ḥumrān and Ḥamza b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ṭayyār – who changed their allegiance and joined his group.[69] The most eminent of the three was Abū al-Ḥasan b. A'yān b. Sunsan, popularly known as al-Zurāra. It is believed that Ḥumrān, who had been a close associate of Zayn al-'Ābidīn and later came to be an extremely committed follower of al-Bāqir, was the first to take the step.[70] Ḥamza is believed to have hesitated between various claimants before finally choosing to follow al-Bāqir.[71]

The fact that Zurāra joined al-Bāqir's group seems to have been significant, for he was regarded not only as an eminent traditionist but also a famous theologian who had a wide circle of disciples in Kūfa.[72] The sources indicate that Zurāra played a significant role in the development of Shī'ī thought for he is one of the most frequently quoted authorities in the major books of the Shī'a, whether Ithnā'asharī or Ismaili.[73] Zurāra survived al-Bāqir and became one of al-Ṣādiq's closest disciples. Later, al-Ṣādiq apparently disavowed him; but al-Kashshī tells us that, in order to save Zurāra, al-Ṣādiq had acted in the same way as the Prophet Khiḍr who sank a ship to save it from being taken from its owners by a tyrannical king.

Apart from Zurāra, another striking figure in Kūfa was Muḥammad b. Muslim b. Riyyāḥ al-Ṭā'ifī.[74] A *mawlā* of Thaqīf, he was a miller by trade and popularly known as *al-a'war*, 'the one-eyed'. He was extremely well-regarded in the legal circles of Kūfa and was the contemporary of famous jurists such as

Ibn Abī Laylā, Abū Ḥanīfa and Sharīk al-'Ādī. While Zurāra was a traditionist and a speculative theologian, Muḥammad b. Muslim, who died in the year 150/767–8, not only had a sound knowledge of traditions but was also a practising lawyer, renowned for his quick decisions. He appears to have also been a famous *zāhid* (ascetic).[75]

Abū al-Qāsim Burayd b. Mu'āwiya al-'Ijlī, an Arab by origin who also died in the year 150/767–8, was yet another adherent of al-Bāqir[76] as well as of al-Ṣādiq. Burayd was a notable jurist and had a special place with both imams, al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq. Al-Bāqir is believed to have said that he was worthy of Paradise (as he did to Layth al-Bakhtarī al-Murādī, Muḥammad b. Muslim and Zurāra). Burayd later became one of the main authorities on Shī'ī *fiqh*.

Abū Baṣīr Layth al-Bakhtārī al-Murādī, a *mawlā* of Banū Asad, was yet another follower of al-Bāqir, and later of al-Ṣādiq, who attained great fame as a Shī'ī *faqīh* (jurist) and traditionist. Al-Ṣādiq is believed to have said of al-Murādī, Burayd, Zurāra and Muḥammad b. Muslim that they were the 'tent pegs of the world' and that without them the prophetic traditions would have been lost. They were, he added, 'the fastest runners and the closest associates' of the imam.[77]

Abū Khālid al-Kābūlī Kankar[78] and Abū Ḥamza al-Thumālī,[79] formerly disciples of Zayn al-'Ābidīn, were also among al-Bāqir's followers. Abū Ḥamza, according to Ibn Dāwūd, was a trustworthy transmitter and is believed to have written a book.[80] Many traditions, especially those relating to miracles, may be traced to him.[81] Abū al-Qāsim al-Fuḍayl b. Yāsar al-Nahdī[82] was another favourite of al-Bāqir and later of al-Ṣādiq who is believed to have said of him what the Prophet had said of Salmān al-Fārisī: 'Al-Fuḍayl is from us, the People of the House.'

Al-Kumayt b. Zayd occupied a unique place in al-Bāqir's following. He was a renowned poet of his period, and although he was a devout Shī'ī he was friendly with al-Ṭirrimāḥ, a Sufrī-Khārijī and a poet of the Ṭayyi' tribe.[83] Kumayt had a significant role to play, for his verses, the *Hāshimiyyāt*, devoted to the praises of the *ahl al-bayt*, were such that they could be appreciated by

the public at large.[84] The fact that on occasion he celebrates the glory of Umayyads did not prejudice his attitude to the Banū Hāshim. This was done in order to placate the caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik to whose attention his work was brought by the viceroy of 'Irāq, Yūsuf b. 'Umar.[85] At heart, Kumayt was with the Banū Hāshim. In his view, the power of the Umayyads was illegitimate[86] and the claims of the Banū Hāshim were based on their being 'inheritors'[87] to quote the Qur'ān.[88] Kumayt's work has survived and serves as one of the most ancient pieces of evidence for the doctrine of the imamate.

Another striking personality in Kūfa was Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Nu'mān al-Aḥwāl. He was one of the most devoted adherents of al-Bāqir whose claims he defended against Zayd. He later became an equally committed follower of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq and distinguished himself in theology. He was known for his sharp and stimulating answers in debates and disputes with his adversaries. He is reported to have held heated discussions with the famous scholar Abū Ḥanīfa. He defended the rights of the imam and believed in complete obedience to the imam who possesses the supreme knowledge necessary to guide mankind to ultimate felicity. The sources suggest he wrote a number of works including *Kitāb al-imāma* and *Kitāb al-radd 'alā' al-Mu'tazila fī imāmat al-mafḍūl*.[89]

Baṣra

The city of Baṣra was supposed to be generally non-Shī'ī, but al-Bāqir is believed to have had a few followers there as well. Muḥammad b. Marwān al-Baṣrī was one such person. He was a Kūfan by birth but lived in Baṣra. In al-Kashshī's view he was a descendant of Abū al-Aswad al-Du'alī.[90] Another eminent Baṣran follower of al-Bāqir was Ismā'īl b. al-Faḍl al-Hāshimī,[91] a descendant of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and a trustworthy transmitter. Yet another was Mālik b. A'yān al-Juhanī[92] who should not be confused with his namesake Mālik b. A'yān, Zurāra's brother. Al-Juhanī survived his imam, al-Bāqir, and died during the lifetime of al-Ṣādiq.

Mecca

Al-Bāqir's group in Mecca consisted of very few notables. One of the most important *fuqahā'* there was Ma'rūf b. Kharr Abūdh, a *mawlā* of the Quraysh. His reputation as a traditionist could not be compared to that of Zurāra and was sometimes regarded as weak. According to al-Kashshī, he seems to have been of moderate Shī'ī persuasion.[93]

Another central figure in Mecca was Maymūn b. al-Aswad al-Qaddāḥ, al-Makkī, a *mawlā* of the Banū Makhzūm.[94] All sorts of legends and myths have been invented by later non-Shī'ī sources against Maymūn and his son 'Abd Allāh. Ibn Rizām was the first to concoct a polemical treatise providing an anti-Ismaili version of the Fatimid genealogy. This work, although lost, was utilised extensively by Akhū Muḥsin (d.c. 375/987–8) to discredit the whole Ismaili movement. It also became the basis for most subsequent Sunnī writings on the subject. This erroneous conception of the origins of Ismailism, however, has been cleared up by Ivanow's painstaking research which demonstrates that the story of Ibn al-Qaddāḥ, the supposed founder of the Ismaili movement, 'is nothing but an aetiological myth' which was invented incidentally and later gradually embellished and developed during the course of transmission, both oral and written.[95]

According to Ivanow, Maymūn al-Qaddāḥ was an influential resident of Mecca, and a devout servant of Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir and his son Ja'far. In Ivanow's view, it is quite possible that Maymūn was a merchant of some sort and he also appears to have been in charge of the imam's property in Mecca. Maymūn does not seem to have been educated, but he had an impressive personality. He had several sons, of whom 'Abd Allāh gained fame as the alleged progenitor of the Ismaili imams. Being in the service of the imams, he had the benefit of learning from them directly, and it is quite possible that he committed to writing what he heard, although he seems to have had little time for the proper study of traditions. Moreover, he restricted himself to traditions from al-Ṣādiq. He does not seem

to have been in contact with Mūsā al-Kāẓim, the younger half-brother of Ismā'īl, and there are no traditions reported by him from Mūsā al-Kāẓim. On the other hand, it is possible that he may have recorded some which were lost.

Other eminent followers of al-Bāqir were Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl b. Bazī' and other members of the Bazī' family,[96] Abū Hārūn and his namesake Abū Hārūn al-Makfūf,[97] 'Uqba b. Bashīr al-Asadī, Aslam al-Makkī, formerly a *mawlā* of Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya and Nājiyya b. Abī Mu'ādh b. Muslim al-Naḥwī.[98] It must be pointed out, however, that it is not possible to determine precisely where these people lived.

A number of al-Bāqir's followers, such as Abū al-Jarūd Ziyād b. Mundhīr, Fuḍayl b. Rassān and Abū Khālid al-Wāsiṭī, left his group to join the Zaydiyya movement.[99] Still others, such as Qays b. Rabī' and his companion, abandoned al-Bāqir on account of two different answers he gave to the same question on two different occasions.[100] Another group, which includes Mughīra b. Sa'īd al-'Ijlī, Bayān b. Sim'ān and Abū Manṣūr al-'Ijlī, were reportedly repudiated by al-Bāqir on account of their extremist views.

Many more associates of al-Bāqir have been listed in the Shī'ī sources but it is not always easy to determine where these people lived or whether they were intimately involved with al-Bāqir.

This section conveys a picture of a wide and knowledgeable circle of adherents. The sources give us an indication of an organisation of al-Bāqir's Shī'a at the time, clearly showing the existence of a rudimentary system which enabled al-Bāqir to communicate with his Shī'a and they with him. The difficulty arises from the fact that Shī'ī organisation was largely underground and also because there was not one, but several competing organisations. Moreover, numerous people who narrated traditions from al-Bāqir were not necessarily his followers but were, nevertheless, mentioned among his associates by some sources. Many of them were sympathetic to the 'Alid cause but were not necessarily Shī'ī. It is, therefore, often difficult to distinguish between those who were merely al-Bāqir's transmitters and those who were his real followers.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Al-Bāqir's Contribution to Shī'ī Jurisprudence

Al-Bāqir's juridical views spring directly from his epistemology or theory of knowledge. Since he believed that the imam was endowed with the hereditary '*ilm* which made him an ultimate source of knowledge, he and his followers maintained that 'true knowledge' was restricted to an imam from the Prophet's family. Thus, the tradition of the community as a whole was not valid as a proper source for law; only the traditions from the imam, or from the Prophet as attested by the imams, were allowed. This attitude of al-Bāqir's school towards the majority of the early community of the Prophet's companions was to change the legal pattern of the Shī'a in the years to come. The basis of Shī'ī law and theology emerged from the perspective adopted by al-Bāqir and was left to develop within the circle of his adherents.[1]

During this period one of the main factors determining the differences between various groups was a positive or negative attitude towards the first two caliphs and a harsh or lenient attitude towards 'Uthmān. However, the reason for the establishment of the *madhhab ahl al-bayt*, the Shī'ī school of thought, appears to have been related not so much to these attitudes as to the sphere of religious practice. This was the time when the traditionists were engaged in constructing systems and

frameworks within which the pious life could find expression. Consequently, there were conflicting opinions and discussions over points of law within the early articulation of these formative legal perspectives. It is worth noting that law in Islam does not only consist of a proper legal system, but also of ordinances governing worship and ritual; it is thus an all-embracing body of religious commandments and prohibitions.

Amidst the polemical discussions of so many legal scholars, it became paramount for the followers of the imam to receive the right guidance. The situation in which 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-'Ābidīn found himself after Karbala led him to avoid active political life. Some sources mention that he was one of the most prominent jurists of the time, held in respect and visited by the famous jurists (*fuqahā'*) and scholars (*'ulamā'*) of Medina and elsewhere.[2] Al-Bāqir's time, on the other hand, was far more congenial and conducive to the task of the systematic teaching of law to his followers. The ruling authorities appeared less hostile to religious activities as long as they did not impinge upon the political sphere.

Shī'ī sources record the following observation by Ja'far al-Ṣādiq on this question:

> Before Abū Ja'far, [al-Bāqir] the Shī'a did not know the rites of pilgrimage and what was permitted (*ḥalāl*) to them and what was forbidden (*ḥarām*) to them. But Abū Ja'far opened these up to them and explained the rites of the pilgrimage and what was permitted and what was forbidden. Thus, the people came to have need of them [i.e. Shī'a], whereas before they had need of the people.[3]

This statement is a clear pronouncement on al-Bāqir's contribution in the juridical field. Until his time, the Shī'a were at odds, not only over the rites of the pilgrimage but also over what was allowed and forbidden. Consequently, they would follow local practices in Mecca, Medina, Kūfa and other places. Al-Bāqir's views on the role of the imam and his hereditary *'ilm* had a significant impact on them. It is on the basis of the

authority stemming from such *'ilm* that his explanations and teachings on rites, rituals – especially those of the *ḥajj* and other juridical matters were assimilated and put into effect by his followers. He also gave clear guidelines regarding what was permissible and what was prohibited. It must be added, however, that at the time, the community was not as deeply divided as it was to become in the future and many Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth (traditionists) were sympathisers and supporters of the Shī'ī cause without regarding themselves as specifically Shī'ī.

In contrast with the ancient schools of law, which accepted the common doctrine of the community, the traditionists maintained that the authority of the traditions (*aḥādīth*) from the Prophet superseded that of the community. Al-Bāqir and his followers went even further and rejected the tradition of the community completely, allowing only traditions from the imams, and from the Prophet's family as attested by the imams, as a proper source of law. Consequently, al-Bāqir's legal theory evolved along different lines from those of the traditionists and he laid the foundation of a separate school of jurisprudence – the *madhhab ahl al-bayt*.

Another significant contribution of al-Bāqir's school to general Islamic law was that, like the traditionists, al-Bāqir and his followers[4] disapproved of both reasoning by analogy (*qiyās*) and personal opinion (*ra'y*), which had become an integral part of the living tradition of the ancient schools.[5] This should not lead us to assume that al-Bāqir was critical of the use of *'aql* or intellect. On the contrary, his traditions, and more particularly those of his son al-Ṣādiq, reveal that *'aql* is the altogether supreme faculty by which God is worshipped[6] and through which the knowledge of good and evil is acquired. This knowledge in turn teaches people, among other things, how to struggle against the tendencies of their own lower nature in order to purify the self.[7] What al-Bāqir was against was dialectical reasoning and personal opinion that was merely speculative and whimsical, being based on no authoritative source. In his view, not only were such methods unacceptable, but those who succumbed to them were actually misguiding the community.

According to Schacht, the origins of Shī'ī law are late and their early works are apocryphal;[8] but in the light of al-Bāqir's contribution such a thesis seems scarcely defensible. Undoubtedly, it is difficult to prove all that has come down to us from al-Bāqir as authentic. But even if certain traditions from him are spurious, it should not lead us to conclude that the entire tradition stemming from him is fictitious.[9] Living at the time when legal opinion was dominated by the struggle between two concepts – that of the common doctrine of the community and that of the authority of the traditions from the Prophet – it seems impossible that a respected individual such as al-Bāqir, one so well-versed in religious knowledge, would not have been involved in these discussions. The vast corpus of traditions which his own and his son's followers have passed on is a clear testimony to this. This corpus must be seen as developing alongside the school itself, as was the case in the elaboration of Sunnī jurisprudence, for in essence they are all rooted in this period. The schools of law, says Madelung, have clearly developed alongside each other.

On the one hand, Schacht maintains that the division of the community was not yet deep enough to exclude the mutual influence of schools of law while, on the other hand, he asserts that legal maxims that were not exclusively Shī'ī could not generally be valid as Shī'ī law. The explanation for this, according to Madelung, is that the differences in the law, at all events from the Sunnī side, had not yet been exaggerated into a question of essential or dogmatic belief. This happened during the third century under the growing influence of the Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā'a, representing, on the one hand, a strictly anti-Shī'ī tendency and, on the other, a hostility to disagreement (*ikhtilāf*) on questions of law which the older schools of law had largely accepted. Therefore, in Madelung's view it was then possible for a question like *masḥ 'alā al-khuffayn*, rubbing the shoe or sock in ritual ablution, to be considered as a question of belief, not because the Shī'a had belatedly made it into an issue. Consequently, it is hardly fair for Schacht to state that the Zaydiyya were the first Shī'ī sect to secede from the Sunnī community

since at this point in time the Shī'ī/Sunnī distinction had not crystallised.[10]

The Zaydiyya, as we have seen, were doctrinally divided into two main groups: the Batriyya and the Jārūdiyya. The scanty evidence available to us indicates that the Jārūdiyya were originally supporters of al-Bāqir. Furthermore, their beliefs, which are fundamentally different from those of the Batriyya, clearly suggest traces of al-Bāqir's school. The Jārūdiyya took elements of the legal theory of al-Bāqir's school and then added their own requirements to it. For instance, like al-Bāqir's school, they maintained that 'true knowledge' was confined to the Prophet's family but also, according to the Zaydī belief that any one of the sons of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn could 'rise in opposition', they believed that true knowledge could also be obtained from any one of the descendants of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn.[11]

The *Majmū' al-fiqh*[12] is regarded by many scholars as the oldest attempt at a codification of Islamic law. Goldziher[13] has argued that if it were a direct product of Zayd b. 'Alī's circle, then the precedence of the Shī'ī branch of Islam in the *fiqh* literature that has survived would have to be recognised. The evidence suggests that, although the Batriyya tendency was clearly dominant at the beginning, it was the doctrine of the 'stronger' Jārūdiyya that eventually prevailed amongst the Zaydiyya. Their doctrine, as noted earlier, was borrowed from al-Bāqir's school. The writings on the imamate in Zaydī literature are also clearly Jārūdī. They tend to regard the imamate of Abū Bakr and 'Umar as illegitimate. The *Risāla 'an Zayd fī ithbāt waṣiyyat Amīr al-Mu'minīn*[14] also seeks to demonstrate the illegitimacy of the first caliphs. Another work, the *Kitāb al-ṣafwa*,[15] attributed to Zayd, also reflects the Jārūdī view. The author in this work laments the dissension in Muḥammad's community and wants to demonstrate that, in order to be saved, all should obey those who belong to the Prophet's family, since it is they who preserved the Qur'ān, know its proper reading and interpretation, and can give orders and prohibitions.

As regards the contents of the *Majmū' al-fiqh*, it is essentially to be considered as the work of Abū Khālid al-Wāsiṭī, the

Jārūdī.[16] Strothmann and Bergstrasser have already proved that the *Corpus Juris* owes to Zayd not much more than his name. A large portion of this corpus is included in the *Amālī* of Aḥmad b. 'Īsā[17] which contains numerous traditions of al-Bāqir reported from Abū al-Jārūd. These include traditions on a wide range of subjects, including *'ibādāt* and *mu'āmalāt*, such as divorce, the drinking of *nabīdh*, saying the *Bismillāh* loudly, the inclusion of *ḥayya 'alā khayr al-'amal* in the call to prayer, the pilgrimage rites, the *masḥ 'alā al-khuffayn* and other issues. This shows the dependence of Zaydī law on al-Bāqir. Thus, Shī'ī law has in al-Bāqir an earlier root than that of Zaydī law, most of which derives from him; it was therefore al-Bāqir who established the *madhhab* (or the legal school) of the *ahl al-bayt*.

Moreover, if, as Goldziher puts it, the priority of the *fiqh* literature of the Zaydīs has to be recognised, then, in the light of the earlier discussion, the priority of al-Bāqir's contribution to *fiqh* stands out with even greater clarity, although there is no specific book on *fiqh* by al-Bāqir. Al-Bāqir's role in *fiqh* is not over-exaggerated, for it appears that not only Zaydī law was derived from him, but also Ismaili[18] and Ithnā'asharī law[19] both record numerous traditions on *fiqh* from him and regard him as the father of *fiqh*. Since Zaydī law, which was finally compiled in Yemen, Ismaili law compiled in Egypt, and Ithnā'asharī law compiled in Baghdad and Qumm, all stem from this one personality, there can be little room to doubt his founding and pioneering role.

Some Legal Problems Common to the Various Shī'ī Groups

The traditions that have come down to us from al-Bāqir suggest that he was more concerned with *furū' al-fiqh* than *uṣūl al-fiqh*. Al-Bāqir's school was not in favour of principles such as *rā'y* (individual opinion) and *qiyās* (analogy) which were used by some contemporary scholars. Later, the branch of legal learning known as *uṣūl al-fiqh*, was developed even further and general Islamic law came to be based on four principles or roots (*uṣūl* pl. of *aṣl*): the Qur'ān, the *Sunna* of the Prophet

from recognised traditions, the consensus (*ijmāʿ*) of the scholars of the community and the method of reasoning by analogy (*qiyās*). The last two have little relevance in al-Bāqir's school for it is the recognised imam who is the source of authoritative guidance in case of gaps in the tradition, or of a problem that arises in the community.[20] This in turn reveals that the Qur'ān and *Sunna* on their own were not enough as sources of law but needed a 'true interpreter' who could only be the Imam of the Time.

Not all that has been related from al-Bāqir in the sphere of jurisprudence can or will be dealt with here. Instead, selections will be made in order to demonstrate his concern with *furūʿ al-fiqh*. An attempt will be also be made to deal with the main features of the legal problems that are common to all the three Shīʿi groups – the Ithnāʿashariyya, the Ismāʿīliyya and the Zaydiyya – along with a brief discussion to show that, contrary to the belief of some scholars, these legal points do in fact belong to the early period. It will also be argued that these legal problems were taught and expounded by al-Bāqir at the same time as other jurists in the early schools of law were discussing and disputing them.

Masḥ ʿalā al-khuffayn

A tradition from Abū Isḥāq al-Sabīʿī (d. 128/9) in Shīʿī works[21] suggests that until al-Bāqir forbade them, people used to wipe/moisten their socks/sandals in ritual ablution (*masḥ ʿalā al-khuffayn*) under certain circumstances instead of washing their feet. As pointed out earlier, Schacht[22] suggested that this only later became a distinctive point of difference between the Shīʿīs, who rejected the practice, and the Sunnīs who considered it to be valid. There are two questions at issue here. The first pertains to the wiping of feet in the ablution – upheld by the Shīʿa – and the washing of the feet – upheld by the Sunnīs. The second is the wiping of the sock/shoe to renew the ablution once it is performed in full – the action permitted by the Sunnīs and prohibited by the Shīʿa. With respect to the first, there

is enough evidence to suggest that the *masḥ* was a controversial issue among the scholars and jurists long before sectarian barriers became firmly established. The dispute revolves around the interpretation of the last line of the Qur'ānic *āya* on *wuḍū'*, 5:6:

> O Ye who believe, when you arise to pray, wash your faces and your arms to the elbows and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles.[23]

The Shī'is read the last word of the phrase *wa-'msaḥū bi ru'ūsikum wa arjulikum*, meaning 'feet', in the genitive, governed by the preposition *bi*. The Sunnīs, on the other hand, take the word as the direct object of the verb *aghsilū*, 'wash', and therefore read it as *arjulakum*. Therefore, the Shī'a uphold the *masḥ*, or wiping of the feet, while the Sunnīs insist on the washing of the feet. Al-Ṭabarī, in his *Tafsīr*,[24] has preserved traditions on both these readings from early scholars which point to the fact that the issue was indeed argued about in early Islam. This also shows that the Shī'ī view was held by some scholars at the very beginning of the development of Islamic jurisprudence.

So far as the second issue is concerned, Schacht maintains that the prohibition of the practice of the *masḥ* over the sock or shoe to renew the ablution by the Shī'a is late since no mention of it is made in the Sunnī creed of the second century,[25] but then says that the Sunnīs themselves were unsure of the *masḥ*, thus defeating his own argument. Basing his claim on al-Shāfi'ī's discussion of *masḥ*,[26] Schacht then goes on to assert that the discussion about the *masḥ* started between the *ahl al-ḥadīth* and the ancient schools in Medina, not between the Shī'is and the Sunnīs. Yet what has come down to us of al-Bāqir's traditions from all three Shī'ī sources – Zaydī,[27] Ismaili[28] and Ithnā'asharī[29] – indicates that the Shī'ī prohibition of *masḥ 'alā al-khuffayn* goes back to the time of al-Bāqir.

Nabīdh

This was another area where al-Bāqir's school differed from the Kūfan jurists. *Nabīdh* is a comprehensive designation used for all intoxicating drinks, several varieties of which were known and produced in early Arabia, such as *mizr* from barley, *bit'* from honey and *fāḍīkh* from different kinds of dates. It is believed that, as grapes were scarce in Arabia, 'wine' was usually prepared from varieties of dates and only exceptionally from grapes.[30] The question was whether the prohibition of wine included that of intoxicating drinks. The difficulty in this matter arose because people were accustomed to all kinds of drinks prepared from dates, from raisins and other fruits, drinks which only became inebriating if they were preserved for a long time and, probably, if they were prepared by special methods. Therefore it was difficult to determine the line of demarcation between permitted and prohibited drinks.

Al-Bāqir was known to have prohibited all intoxicating drinks (*muskir*)[31] including *nabīdh*.[32] He did allow fresh fruit juices that had been kept for a day and a night on condition that they had not become intoxicating, in which case even a little of the beverage was forbidden.[33] All three Shī'ī, as well as three of the four Sunnī schools, prohibit the drinking of *nabīdh*.

Although the tradition prohibiting *nabīdh* is to be found in Zaydī sources, Zayd himself was accused of drinking *nabīdh* by Ithnā'asharī writers.[34] It is believed that a man once approached al-Bāqir asking him his opinion regarding *nabīdh*, for he had seen Zayd drinking it. To this, al-Bāqir is said to have replied that he did not believe that Zayd would drink such beverages, but even if he did, since he was neither a prophet nor a trustee of the Prophet, he could be right at times and wrong at others.

Al-Jahr bi Bismillāh

Shī'ī sources of all three persuasions normally mention the *masḥ* and the *nabīdh* together in a tradition of al-Bāqir along with a third point that is not common to them. In Zaydī[35] and

Ismaili[36] sources this third point is *al-jahr bi bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm*, namely saying the *bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm* aloud as opposed to whispering it;[37] in Ithnā'asharī sources[38] it is the *mut'at al-ḥajj*. However, although the Ithnā'asharīs do not mention the *bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm* with the *nabīdh* and *masḥ*, they are not opposed to it. They too believe that the *bismillāh al-raḥmān al-raḥīm* should be recited aloud,[39] but the practice is apparently not as important to them as it is to the Zaydīs and to the Ismailis who, following a tradition of al-Bāqir's son, al-Ṣādiq, consider it to be among the three matters in which *taqiyya* cannot be observed.[40]

On the other hand, the Zaydīs and the Ismailis not only omit any mention of the *mut'at al-ḥajj* as one of the three things not bound by *taqiyya* but oppose it completely, although the Zaydī sect of the Jārūdiyya are said to have permitted it.[41] The *mut'at al-ḥajj* is a form of pilgrimage that emphasises a separation between the *'umra* and the *ḥajj* but within the same visit.[42]

The *Adhān* or the Call to the Ritual Prayer

This is another matter of dispute between Shī'a and Sunnīs. The Shī'a of all three persuasions agree that 'Umar modified the formula of the *adhān* and dropped one of the statements.[43] This statement, the Shī'a assert, was *ḥayya 'alā khayr al-'amal*.[44] According to them, 'Umar, fearing that people would prefer prayers to *jihād*, gave orders to have it removed.

As this is a serious allegation, it calls for a brief investigation as to whether this formula did belong to the *adhān* at an early period, or whether the Shī'a made it belatedly their own. The early jurists and the traditionists have passed over this issue in silence, perhaps doubting the Shī'ī claim. However, some evidence on the question has been preserved in Shaybānī's recension of Mālik's *Muwaṭṭa*[45] giving us an indication that the formula did belong to the *adhān* at a much earlier period. The tradition recorded by Shaybānī, which has a standard Medinan *isnād* (Mālik–Nāfi'–Ibn 'Umar), says that Ibn 'Umar would sometimes recite *ḥayya 'alā khayr al-'amal* after *ḥayya 'alā al-falāḥ*.

It may have been easier to doubt the authenticity of such a tradition had it not been for the fact that it refers to a practice that was no longer in use.[46] It must be noted that Shaybānī rejects this practice saying that nothing that did not belong to the *adhān* should be added to it. Yet it is significant that this tradition is not to be found in Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Laythī's recension of the *Muwaṭṭa'*[47] and in fact seems to have been suppressed by all Sunnī sources until it reappears in Ibn Ḥazm,[48] who also rejects it as a fabrication.

Shīʿī sources of all three origins record traditions from al-Bāqir[49] saying that the formula was originally there but was removed by ʿUmar. Since all three independently support the fact that al-Bāqir did make this statement, and since the tradition regarding it has been mentioned in Shaybānī's recension of Mālik's *Muwaṭṭa'*, it seems fairly certain that the formula belonged to the early period and may indeed have been removed during ʿUmar's caliphate. However, were we to accept the suggestion that, as the form of the *adhān* had not been fixed, the formula of *ḥayya ʿalā khayr al-ʿamal* may well have been added by the *ahl al-bayt* after the martyrdom of al-Ḥusayn to emphasise the quiescent policy of the imams,[50] then we would have to retract the conclusion that the formula may well have been removed during ʿUmar's time. The martyrdom of al-Ḥusayn came much later, and if the formula was not introduced until after this event it could not have been removed under ʿUmar. In that case either one has to forget that ʿUmar ever modified the *adhān* or to maintain that the imams reintroduced (instead of introduced) this barred formula after al-Ḥusayn's martyrdom.

Qunūt

The term *qunūt*, which came to mean imprecation against political enemies during ritual prayer, may have originally had a different meaning. For the Qur'ānic phrase, *wa qūmū li'Lāhī qānitīn* (2:238), which follows the words 'Keep the *ṣalawāt* and the *ṣalāt al-wusṭā*', does not seem to indicate this meaning

literally, and commentators have suggested it may mean either a state of submission or supplication.[51] Al-Ṭabarī[52] gives no suggestion that *qunūt* means 'cursing enemies', nor does the *Lisān al-ʿArab* of Ibn Manẓūr. Most commentators on the *ḥadīth*[53] maintain that *qunūt* is a 'standing recitation', usually connected in meaning with *duʿā'*. The traditions that have come down to us about *qunūt* are conflicting, some favouring it,[54] others either rejecting it altogether[55] or restricting it to certain prayers.[56] Yet others state that the Prophet said it only for a certain period and then abandoned it.[57] Apart from Abū Ḥanīfa, who excluded *qunūt* from all prescribed prayer,[58] others mainly seem to dispute whether the *qunūt* is allowed in all prayers or restricted to a certain prayer, that is the *ṣalāt al-wusṭā*.

This dispute stems from the interpretation of the Qur'ānic verse cited above, namely whether *qānitīn* refers to all the prayers or only to *ṣalāt al-wusṭā*. Mālik thinks it is *ṣalāt al-wusṭā*, which for him is the *fajr* prayer.[59] Strothmann and Goldziher believe that the Zaydīs also followed the Mālikīs,[60] although the traditions in the *Amālī Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā* from al-Bāqir, reported by Abū al-Jārūd, do not specify the times of *qunūt*.[61] Traditions in Ismaili sources[62] maintain that the *qunūt* prayer has many dimensions, showing that there is nothing fixed for *qunūt*. It can thus be said at any time in all prayers, if one so wishes, and it does not necessarily involve cursing. Ithnāʿasharī sources[63] refer *qānitīn* to all prayers as does al-Shāfiʿī.[64]

Ṣalāt al-Janāza

The funeral prayer is yet another subject of dispute between the Sunnī and the Shīʿa. The Sunnīs maintain that it should consist of four *takbīrs*, while for the Shīʿa of all persuasions it comprises five.[65] Both groups claim their final authority to be the Prophet whose practice, according to the traditions that have come down to us, appears to have varied from time to time as well as from person to person. There are reports maintaining that the Prophet would say either four, five or six *takbīrs*.[66] This practice was maintained by the first caliph but

was standardised to four *takbīrs* by the second caliph 'Umar on the basis of the last funeral service performed by the Prophet.[67]

'Alī is reported to have said up to seven *takbīrs*.[68] Mālik[69] and al-Shāfi'ī[70] both follow the practice of four *takbīrs*, although elsewhere al-Shāfi'ī does record traditions that 'Alī had said five or six *takbīrs* at one funeral.[71] As late as the fifth century, Ibn Ḥazm records the names of some companions saying five *takbīrs*.[72] This shows that the matter was disputed early in Islam and that the Shī'a did not made this doctrine their own at a late date.

Only a few of the legal problems that were discussed and argued over during the late first and early second centuries of Islam have been dealt with here. Other issues that were expounded at the time by al-Bāqir included the *khiyār al-majlis*, (the right of option given to a party in a sale as long as they had not parted), and the *manāsik al-ḥajj* (the rites of pilgrimage). In his own group, and to those who did not belong to his group but who asked for his opinion, al-Bāqir gave specific advice on legal issues. This makes him the first imam to systematically undertake the teaching of law.

Al-Bāqir's teaching and contribution did not stop at this but was continued by his son and successor Ja'far al-Ṣādiq under whom it became so effective and influential that the Ithnā'ashariyya call their legal school the *Ja'farī madhhab*. Ismaili *fiqh*, codified by al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān more than two centuries later,[73] is based mainly on traditions from al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq. Zaydī law, as noted earlier, depends on al-Bāqir to a great extent. It would therefore be no exaggeration to conclude that al-Bāqir is the father of Shī'ī law and that his influence is felt in Shī'ī circles to this day.

Epilogue

This work on Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir will, it is hoped, raise awareness of the seminal role he played in establishing certain key doctrines and perspectives of Shīʿī thought, a role so often overlooked in studies of this period. It focuses primarily on the imam's pivotal position in early Islamic history and his decisive contribution to the articulation of central Shīʿī doctrines, especially the imamate and its qualifications, and the transmission of knowledge, together with its application in religious, theological, juridical and ethical domains. These are all of great importance, and can be seen as the foundations upon which his son and successor, the Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (d.148/765), built the impressive edifice of Shīʿī law and theology.

This is one aspect of the role indicated by his epithet Bāqir al-ʿIlm, the one who 'splits open' knowledge. In addition to his importance in the transmission of formal knowledge, he also played the role of a spiritual guide. The Shīʿī tradition discussed in chapter four, highlights in particular this characteristic of the imamate, where the concept of 'light' becomes associated with the spiritual quality of an imam's knowledge and his role as a spiritual guide. These two complementary dimensions of knowledge, formal and spiritual, are what makes an imam an imam. It is clear that al-Bāqir's role is perceived as that of a guide and initiator into the inner paths of knowledge and wisdom. This knowledge is experiential and spiritual, realised

within the heart of each individual believer.

An illustration of this role of the imam as an embodiment of the knowledge that he radiates can be gleaned from the following account of a dialogue between al-Bāqir and Jābir al-Juʿfī.[3]

Jābir relates that he once visited Imam al-Bāqir's house and found him reciting words of praise with prayer beads in his hand. Jābir said within himself, in awe of the imam's presence, 'Truly you are great'. Jābir's account continues:

> The imam raised his head and said to me, 'Truly, he is great whom He has made great; and he is knowledgeable whom He has made knowledgeable, through what has come from Him to me. I am the servant of God, glorified and exalted be He!'
>
> I said within myself, 'This is [but] the veil: so what will the Veiled be like!' Then he raised his head towards me, and I saw a tremendous radiance, and a dazzling light that my sight could scarcely bear, and my intellect could scarcely comprehend. Then the imam said [speaking to God], 'This is indeed one of Your Friends.' He then asked me, 'Shall I give [you] more?' I said 'This is enough for me'.

Notes

Chapter One

1. These have been dealt with in chapter four under al-Bāqir's views on the imamate.

2. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna*, ed. 'Abd Allāh S. al-Samārrā'ī' in *al-Ghuluww wa al-firaq al-ghāliyya fī al-ḥaḍārat al-islāmiyya* (Baghdad, 1972).

3. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa al-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje et al. (Leiden, 1879–1901), vol. 1, pp. 1172–3 describes the event in detail in the words of 'Alī himself.

4. Al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ*, (Cairo, 1292/1875), vol. 2, p. 299.

5. Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. H. M. al-Mas'ūdī, 8 vols (Cairo, 1349/1930), vol. 2, p. 324.

6. Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad* (Cairo, 1313/1896), vol. 1, p. 151.

7. Wilferd Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate* (Cambridge, 1997), has dealt with this at length. See his introduction.

8. W. M. Watt, 'Shi'ism under the Umayyads', JRAS, (1960), pp. 168 ff.

9. Muḥammad b. Manṣūr al-Murādī, *Amālī Aḥmad b 'Īsā*, H. 135 Ambrosiana. This has now been published under the title *Kitāb al-'ulūm al-shahīr bi amālī Aḥmad b. 'Īsā* collected by Muḥammad b. Mânsūr b. Yazīd al-Murādī al-Kūfī (1401/1981).

10. See E. Kohlberg, 'Shī'ī Ḥadīth', in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, 1, *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, ed.

A. F. L. Beeston et al. (Cambridge, 1983), p. 301.

11. Al-Ṣaffār was an important *rāwī* (transmitter) of al-Kulaynī. The text itself is extant and has been edited by Mirzā Kūtchebāghī (Tabriz, 1380).

12. For more details see Ismail K. Poonawala's *Biobibliography of Ismā'īlī Literature* (Malibu, California, 1977), pp. 36ff. See also Hans Daiber, 'Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī (10th Century AD) on the Unity and Diversity in Religions', in *Dialogue and Syncretism: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, ed. J. Gort et al. (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1989), pp. 87–104.

13. For more details on the contents of each of the sixteen parts in four volumes see Ismā'īl b. 'Abd al-Rasūl al-Majdū', *Fihrist al-Majdū'*, ed. 'Alinaqī Munzavī (Tehran, 1966). Part 1 has been printed by al-Jāmi' al-Sayfiyya (Surat, n.d.). It has been edited by al-Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥusayni al-Jalālī (Qumm, 1409–12/1988–92).

14. See for more details Poonawala's *Biobibliography*, pp. 51–2. The microfilm used in this work is the Tübingen version.

15. Edited by Ismail K. Poonawala (Montreal, 1970).

16. For details about the manuscripts and editions of these works, refer to Poonawala's *Biobibliography*, pp. 52–4.

17. This work has been analysed by Heinz Halm in 'Zur Datierung des ismā'īlitischen 'Buches der Zwischenzeiten und der zehn Konjunktionen' (*Kitāb al-fatarāt wa'l-qirānāt al-'ashara*) HS Tübingen Ma VI 297' in *Die Welt des Orients*, 8 (1975), pp. 91–107.

18. See Poonawala's *Biobibliography*, pp. 70–5 for more details regarding this as well as other works of the author.

19. This work has been edited and translated with notes by S. Makarem under the title *The Political Doctrine of the Ismā'īlīs* (Delmar, New York, 1977).

Chapter Two

1. See Qur'ān verses 3:33–4; 19:58; 6:84–9; 37:76–7; 57:26; 11:71–3; 4:54.

2. See the introduction to Madelung, *The Succession*, especially pp. 16–17.

3. W. M. Watt, *Muḥammad, Prophet and Statesman* (Oxford, 1961), pp. 35–6.

4. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 1817; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh* (Beirut,

n.d.) vol. 2, pp. 123 ff.; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Beirut, n.d.), vol. 3, pp. 110 ff. See also later sources such as Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-ta'rīkh* (Beirut, 1975), vol. 2, p. 156 and al-Suyūṭī, *Ta'rīkh al-khulafā'* tr. H. S. Jarret (Calcutta, 1881), pp. 67–70.

5. It is claimed that even during the Prophet's lifetime there was a group deeply attached to 'Alī who on that account came to be referred to as the Shī'a of 'Alī. See al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna*, p. 259 in al-Sāmarrā'ī's edition and al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq al-Shī'a*, ed. H. Ritter (Istanbul, 1931), p. 15.

6. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, ed. M. Ḥamīdullāh (Cairo, 1960) vol. 1, pp. 579–91; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 1837–45; Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat Rasūl Allāh*, ed. M. Saqqa et. al. (Cairo, 1936), vol. 4, pp. 307–10; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 123–6.

7. Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 126.

8. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 1, p. 582.

9. Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 585 ff.; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 126; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 1818.

10. Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 585 ff.; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 126; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 1818 and *al-Imāma wa al-siyāsa* incorrectly attributed to Ibn Qutayba although quite an early work, give a detailed account of the attack on Fāṭima's house by 'Umar and Abū Bakr as well as the force they exercised to secure 'Alī's homage. See also L. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Fāṭima', EI2, vol. 2, pp. 841–50, where the author states that these events must have been based on facts.

11. Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 126. A report in al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 1, p. 585 says Abū Bakr sent 'Umar and Zayd b. Thābit to 'Alī's house.

12. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 1, pp. 585 ff.; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 126; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 1818.

13. For details of names see al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 126 ff.; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 1, p. 588.

14. See Madelung, *The Succession*, pp. 35–6.

15. Al-Mufīd, *Kitāb al-irshād* (Najaf, 1392/1972), tr. into English as *The Book of Guidance*, by I. K. A. Howard (London, 1981), pp. 116–37 of the English translation.

16. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 1, pp. 585–6, strongly suggests that 'Alī delayed the pledge until after Fāṭima's death, which occurred after six months. One of the reports is on the authority of 'Ā'isha.

17. Fāṭima claimed the estate of Fadak and maintained that, like the Prophet's share of the produce from Khaybar, Fadak should come

to her. See 'Fadak', EI2. See also Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 2, pp. 314 ff.; Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat*, vol. 3, pp. 352, 368; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 127.

18. Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 127. Kumayt (d. 126/743) in his *Hāshimiyyāt* does not fail to mention this incident as to how Fāṭima was illegally deprived of her paternal inheritance, especially Fadak and 'Alī's authority. Al-Kumayt, *al-Hāshimiyyāt*, ed. al-Saydāwī (Cairo, 1950) and *Die Hashimijjat*, ed. J. Horovitz (Leiden, 1907).

19. Madelung, *The Succession*, pp. 28 ff.

20. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 1827; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 1, p. 583.

21. Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 136 ff.; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 2135. The choice of these two men is quite revealing in that, first of all, none of them belonged to the Banū Hāshim and, secondly, the branches of both these men, Banū Zuhra and Banū Umayya respectively had been great rivals of Banū Hāshim before Islam. Furthermore, both of them belonged to the wealthy circles of the Muslim *umma*.

22. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 2143–4; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 3, p. 196, records a tradition saying that 'Alī and Ṭalḥa approached Abū Bakr asking him how he would answer God on the day of resurrection. Abū Bakr is said to have replied that he had appointed the best one among them.

23. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 1, p. 41.

24. L. Veccia Vaglieri, 'Alī', EI2, vol. 1, pp. 381–6. See also Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, ed. E. Sachau (Leiden, 1905–40), vol. 3, pp. 212 ff.

25. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 2770 ff. and p. 2796.

26. See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 2770 ff., and an annotated translation by Rex Smith, vol. 14 (Albany, N.Y., 1994). The verses in question are: 'Envied for what good things they have; may God not remove from them the thing for which they are envied.'

27. Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 3, pp. 246 ff. See also al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 2778; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. 5, ed. S. D. F. Goitein (Jerusalem, 1936), pp. 16, 18; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 160.

28. See Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 3, pp. 41–2.

29. See *al-Shiqshiqiyya*: *Nahj al-balāgha*, I, no. 3, pp. 48–50. See also Howard's translation of al-Mufīd's, *Irshād*, pp. 212–13.

30. Al-Mufīd, *Irshād*, tr. by Howard, pp. 210–11.

31. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 5, p. 19.

32. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 2780.

33. Ibid., p. 2786.

34. Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 3, pp. 42 ff.; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 5, p. 22; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 162; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 2793.

35. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 2785 ff.

36. Ibid., p. 2786. For a more detailed account of Miqdād's protest, see al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, p. 163.

37. Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 171.

38. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 5, pp. 52 ff.; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 2858 ff.; al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, ed. M. M. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, 4th edition (Cairo, 1964), vol. 2, pp. 339 ff.; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 171 ff. All these sources, except al-Ṭabarī, also mention that 'Alī, together with al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn and 'Ammār b. Yāsir, accompanied Abū Dharr to see him off and even talked to him, despite orders from 'Uthmān to the contrary.

39. See Wilferd Madelung, 'Shī'a', EI2, vol. 9, pp. 420–4 and *The Succession*, pp. 150–7.

40. Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 3, pp. 50 ff.; al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 173 ff.

41. Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 179.

42. Ibid.

43. See Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha*, ed. M. A. Ibrāhīm (Cairo, 1959–64), who has collected the verses describing 'Alī in this way from *Kitāb al-jamal* of Abū Mikhnaf cited in S. Husain M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shī'a Islam* (Beirut, 1979), p. 93. Another early writer who quotes such verses is Naṣr b. Muzāḥim in his *Kitāb al-waq'at al-Ṣiffīn*, (Cairo, 1365/1945), pp. 18, 23 ff., 43, 49, 365, 382, 385.

44. See Abū al-Aswad al-Du'alī, *Dīwān*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Yāsīn (Beirut, 1974), p. 118. See Strothmann's, 'Shī'a', EI, vol. 4, pp. 350–8 and 'Shī'a', SEI, pp. 534–41, al-Mas'ūdī's *Murūj*, vol. 2, p. 416, and al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, vol. 1, p. 329, in the Dār al-Kutub edition and vol. 11, p. 122 in the Būlāq edition.

45. See "Abd Allāh b. Saba", EI2. Also the Muslim scholar 'Alī al-Wardī who suggests quite strongly that the activities attributed to 'Abd Allāh b. Saba' were actually carried out by 'Ammār b. Yāsir whose nickname was also al-Sawdā'. See his *Wa'āẓ al-salāṭīn* (Baghdad, 1954), pp. 148 ff., cited in Jafri, *Origins*, p. 86.

46. Al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-milal wa al-niḥal*, ed. W. Cureton

(London, 1846), p. 132.

47. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 19–20.

48. It should be noted, however, that the name Shī'a was also used for some people who were close to 'Alī in the time of the Prophet. See al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 15, and al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zina*, p. 259, in al-Sāmarrā'ī's edition.

49. Julius Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*, tr. Margaret G. Weir (Calcutta, 1927), pp. 104–7, gives only a sketchy account of al-Ḥasan's abdication using al-Ṭabarī, al-Dīnāwarī and al-Ya'qūbī. However, al-Iṣfahānī in his *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn* (Tehran, 1949), pp. 46–77, and Sha'bān using Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī's *Kitāb al-futūḥ* (Hyderabad, 1395/1975), give details of how Mu'āwiya worked for al-Ḥasan's abdication. See 'Ibn A'tham', EI2, as well as Jafri's *Origins*, pp. 130–68, from which I have obtained the above information.

50. Al-Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil*, p. 73; al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, vol. 2, p. 426.

51. Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 228.

52. Ziyād was initially on the side of 'Alī's supporters but was won over by Mu'āwiya who accepted him as his half-brother. He then appointed him governor of Kūfa and Baṣra after the death of Kūfa's governor al-Mughīra b. Shu'ba in 51/671.

53. Al-Ṭabarī, vol. 2, pp. 111–55; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. 4a–b, ed. M. Schloessinger (Jerusalem, 1938–1971), pp. 211–36; al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī*, vol. 17, pp. 78–96.

54. See al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, p. 235, and *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 19: *The Caliphate of Yazīd b. Mu'āwiyah*, tr. I. K. A. Howard (Albany N.Y., 1990), p. 26.

55. *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 19, p. 32.

56. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 235 and *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 19, p. 26.

57. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 240.

58. C. van Arendonk, *Les Débuts de l'Imāmat Zaidite au Yémen* (Leiden, 1960), p. 10.

59. Julius Wellhausen, *The Religio-Political Factions in Early Islam*, tr. R. C. Ostle and S. M. Walzer (Amsterdam, 1975), pp. 93 ff.

60. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 220.

61. Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, vol. 3, p. 70; al-Mubarrad, *Kitāb al-kāmil* (Cairo n.d.) vol. 1, p. 260; al-Dīnawarī, *Kitāb al-akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, eds 'Abd al-Mun'im 'Āmir and J. al-Shayyāl (Cairo, 1960), p. 266.

62. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 506 ff.

63. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 569 ff.; see also W. M. Watt, *The*

Formative Period of Islamic Thought (Edinburgh, 1973), pp. 44 ff.

64. Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, vol. 5, p. 272; al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, vol. 3, p. 74.

65. 'Alī's son by Khawla, a lady from the Banū Ḥanīfa. For more details see F. Buhl, 'Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiya', EI2, vol. 3, p. 671.

66. Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 5, p. 94 and al-Ṭabarī's long account, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 520–752.

67. Jafri, *Origins*, p. 240. Also refer to Wellhausen, *The Religio-Political Factions*, p. 81. According to al-Wāqidī, Ibn al-Ḥanafiyya had a very low opinion of what Mukhtār was doing then, while Ibn 'Abbās and the rest of the Banū Hāshim praised him highly when he sent them the head of Ibn Ziyād. See Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 5, pp. 91 ff.

68. Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 5.

69. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol.2, pp. 634 ff.; A. A. Dixon, 'Kaysān', EI2, vol. 4, p. 836; W. Madelung, 'Kaysāniyya', EI2, vol. 4, pp. 836–8; I. Friedlaender, 'The Heterodoxies of the Shiites in the Presentation of Ibn Ḥazm', JAOS, 28 (1907), pp. 1–80 and 29 (1908), especially pp. 33 ff.; al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 20 ff. For more details see Wadād al-Qāḍī, *al-Kaysāniyya fī al-ta'rīkh wa al-adab* (Beirut, 1974).

70. Friedlaender, 'The Heterodoxies of the Shiites', pp. 33–4 and 93–5; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal fī al-milal wa al-ahwā' wa al-niḥal* (Cairo, 1347/1928), vol. 4, pp. 94. 2, 179. 20, 180. 7,17, 184. 10, 12; al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, ed. H. Ritter, (Istanbul, 1929–30), pp. 18–23; al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayn al-firaq*, ed. al-Kawtharī (Cairo, 1948), tr. K. C. Seelye as *Moslem Schisms and Sects*, Part I (New York, 1920), pp. 27–38; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 598 ff.; al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, (Paris, 1861–17), vol. 5, pp. 180 ff.; 226 ff., 268, 475; vol. 6, p. 58; vol. 7, p. 117; al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, p. 109 ff.

71. For more details on the *mawlā* element see Wellhausen, *Religio-Political Factions*, pp. 87–95; Watt, *Formative Period*, pp. 44–7; see also Watt, 'Shī'ism under the Umayyads'.

72. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 20–1; also Madelung, 'Kaysāniyya', p. 836.

73. Madelung, 'Kaysāniyya', pp. 838–8.

74. See Madelung, 'Kuraybiyya', EI2, vol. 5, pp. 433–4, and 'Mahdī', EI2, vol. 5, pp. 1230–8.

75. Ibn Qutaybā, *Kitāb al-shi'r wa al-shu'arā*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, (Leiden, 1904), pp. 216–29. Zubayr b. Bakkār, *Dīwān al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, ed. and tr. C. J. Lyall (Oxford, 1918–21), vol. 1, pp. 174–7. Friedlaender, 'The Heterodoxies of the Shiites', pp. 38 ff.; Ibn

Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās (Beirut, 1972), vol. 2, 529–35; see also Madelung, 'Kuraybiyya' and Watt, *Formative Period*, pp. 47–9.

76. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 26 ff.

77. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna* (section on sects), in al-Sāmarrāʾī's edition p. 297; al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, *al-Urjūza al-mukhtāra*, ed. I. K. Poonawala (Montreal, 1970), pp. 227–9. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 25 ff. says that Ḥamza b. ʿUmāra al-Barbarī was initially a follower of Abū Karīb. Later he himself claimed to be an imam and prophet, asserting the divinity of Ibn al-Ḥanafiya.

78. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna*, p. 297.

79. For more details see Friedlaender, 'The Heterodoxies of the Shiʿites', pp. 36 ff. See also Watt, *Formative Period*, *passim*; van Ardendonk, *Les Débuts*, pp. 10–15. For more details on the word *mahdī* see the chapter on 'The Expected Deliverer' in *Themes of Islamic Civilization*, ed. John A. Williams (Berkeley, 1971), pp. 189 ff.

80. M. G. S. Hodgson, 'How did the Early Shīʿa Become Sectarian?' JAOS, 75 (1955), p. 6.

81. Al-Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī* (Cairo, n.d.), vol. 20, part II, p. 177.

Chapter Three

1. Al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, *Sharḥ al-akhbār*, ed. al-Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī al-Jalālī (Qumm, 1409–12/1988–92), vol. 3, p. 276; and his *al-Manāqib wa al-mathālib*, The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London, f. 299a.

2. Most authorities are unanimous about this date. See al-Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl min al-kāfī* (Tehran, 1388/1968), vol. 1, p. 469; Muḥsin b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Amīn, *Aʿyān al-Shīʿa* (Damascus, 1935–61), vol. 4, p. 3. Some authorities mention the year 56/675.

3. Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 2, p. 173.

4. Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 2, p. 320, says that al-Bāqir was not only present but that he even remembered his grandfather al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī being killed.

5. Al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, *Sharḥ al-akhbār*, vol. 3, p. 282. In his *al-Manāqib*, f. 299a, al-Nuʿmān does mention that he was called 'Bāqir al-ʿilm' but without mentioning the source of Zubayr b. Bakkār.

6. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb* (Hyderabad, 1325–

1327/1907–1909) vols 9–10, pp. 350 ff. says that according to Zubayr b. Bakkār, Muḥammad b. 'Alī was called 'Bāqir al-'Ilm'.

7. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, tr. de Slane (Paris, 1842–71), vol. 2, p. 579.

8. Al-Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 320.

9. Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab* (Cairo, 1300–1307/1882–1889), p. 140.

10. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 469.

11. Ibid., pp. 460–70.

12. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Manāqib*, ff. 299b–300a. The account given by al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān in his *Sharḥ* is different. Here al-Bāqir visits Jābir who by then had lost his sight. Asked who he was, al-Bāqir replied that he was Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn, whereupon Jābir asked him to go near him. He then kissed his hand and, as he bent to kiss his feet, al-Bāqir moved away. It was then that Jābir told him about the greetings from the Messenger of Allāh. So al-Bāqir inquired from him how that had happened and Jābir related that once it so happened that the Prophet told him that he would meet Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn from amongst his sons, whom God would grant light and wisdom. The Prophet then asked Jābir to recite his greetings to this son.

13. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 3, p. 2496.

14. Jamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Ḥasani popularly known as Ibn 'Inaba (d. 828 /1424), *'Umdat al-ṭālib* (Najaf, 1961), p. 194.

15. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 305–6; al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Sharḥ*, vol. 3, p. 282 ff. and *Manāqib*, ff. 299 ff., does not specifically say in these two works that the imam after Zayn al-'Ābidīn was al-Bāqir, nor does he give the various traditions given in al-Kulaynī. However, from the way in which he has dealt with the imams, one after the other, it is obvious that he means al-Bāqir succeeded his father, Zayn al-'Ābidīn. In his *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, ed. A. A. A. Fyzee. (Cairo, 1950 and 1960), vol. 1, p. 43, he mentions the imams one after the other by their names.

16. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 305–6; see also al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār* (Tehran, 1376/1956), vol. 6, pp. 100 ff., and al-Mufīd, *Irshād*, tr. Howard, p. 393.

17. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 232–41.

18. According to some sources, the sword appears to have belonged to the Ḥasanid branch of the Prophet's family. See al-Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil*, p. 188.

19. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Manāqib*, f. 302; see also his *Sharḥ*, vol. 3, p. 282 ff. Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn, who wrote his *'Uyūn al-akhbār* much later, also mentions this meeting.

20. S. Moscati, 'Abū Hāshim', EI2, vol. 1, pp. 124–5.

21. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 28, says that the Hāshimiyya split into four groups but 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1024) in his *al-Mughnī*, vol. 20, part II (Cairo, Dar al-Miṣriyya, n.d.), pp. 177 ff., quoting Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī (d. 270/883), says there were five. See also W. Ivanow, 'Early Shi'ite Movements', JBBRAS, 17 (1941), pp. 1–23.

22. He rose in Kūfa in Muḥarram of 127/744 and was defeated. However, he was able to withdraw to Persia. See K. V. Zettersteen, ''Abd Allāh b. Mu'āwiya', EI2, vol. 1, pp. 26–7; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 1879–87, pp. 1947–8, pp. 1976–80. See also Ibn 'Inaba's *'Umdat al-ṭālib*, pp. 21–2. He was ultimately overpowered by Abū Muslim, imprisoned in Herat in 129/746 and was either executed or, as the author of *'Umdat al-ṭālib* says, was kept in prison till 183/799 when he died. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 29 ff. says his followers split into several groups after his death.

23. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 29; Madelung, 'Kaysāniyya', p. 837. See also K. V. Zettersteen, 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās', EI2, vol. 1, p. 381.

24. Al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, p. 28.

25. Al-Nāshi', *Masā'il al-imāma*, ed. J. van Ess (Beirut, 1971), pp. 24–41.

26. Al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, p. 28; al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 30 ff.; Madelung, 'Kaysāniyya'; M. G. S. Hodgson, 'Bayān b. Sim'ān', EI2; see also Watt, *Formative Period*, pp. 50–1.

27. In Abū Mikhnaf's narratives on Karbala there is already the sense that al-Ḥusayn, being the grandson of the Prophet, was in some sense sacred. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 235 ff.

28. Al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, p. 177.

29. Watt, *Formative Period*, p. 52; see also his 'Shi'ism under the Umayyads', JRAS, (1960), pp. 168–9.

30. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 52–3; 54–5.

31. After he gave two different answers to the same question. See al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 52–5.

32. Another follower of al-Bāqir, Muḥammad b. Qays, also left him after what he heard from Ibn Riyāḥ's views.

33. See al-Farazdaq, *Dīwān*, ed. 'Abd Allāh Ismā'īl al-Sāwī (Cairo, 1936), vol. 1, pp. 847 ff.; al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī*, vol. 21, pp. 400 ff. J.

Hell denies the attribution of these verses to Farazdaq cited in Arendonk, *Les Débuts*, p. 15.

34. See al-Kumayt's *Hāshimiyyāt*, pp. 23 and 139 in the Horovitz edition.

35. Al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī*, vol. 7, p. 41, lines 15–17.

36. Al-Kumayt, *Hāshimiyyāt*, 4, vv. 86 ff. and 102 ff.

37. Al-Kumayt, *Hāshimiyyāt*, 2 vv. 28, 31, 37 ff.

38. See W. Madelung, 'Hāshimiyyāt of al-Kumayt', SI, 70 (1989), pp. 5–26.

39. Al-Mufīd, *Irshād*, tr. Howard, pp. 393 ff.

40. Al-Kashshī, *Ikhtiyār ma'rifat al-rijāl* (Mashhad, 1348/1929), p. 228; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 189.

41. The revolt took place in 145/762 during the time of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq in the reign of the second 'Abbāsid caliph Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr (136–58/754–5). See F. Buhl, 'Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr', EI, vol. 3, pp. 665–6. Also see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 3, pp. 209 ff.; Ibn Tiqtaqa, *al-Fakhrī*, pp. 225 ff.

42. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 54; Wilferd Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen* (Berlin, 1965), p. 46. It is also possible that al-Mughīra changed his allegiance after al-Bāqir's death.

43. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 46.

44. Jafri, *Origins*, pp. 249, 265; W. Rajkowski, 'Early Shī'ism in 'Irāq' (PhD thesis, University of London, 1955), pp. 469 ff.

45. Al-Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, tr. Howard, pp. 403–4. Al-Mufid says Zayd was even aware of the bequest of trusteeship to Ja'far al-Ṣādiq.

46. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Manāqib li ahl al-bayt*, f. 305; Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn, *'Uyūn al-akhbār*, vol. 4, pp. 228 ff.; Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, vol. 5, p. 42.

47. Al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, vol. 1, p. 260. Ibn Nashwān al-Ḥimyarī, *Ḥurr al-'ayn (Tafsīr)* (Cairo, 1948), p. 186 cited in Rajkowski, 'Early Shī'ism in 'Irāq'.

48. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 12; al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, vol. 1, p. 160.

49. Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Rasā'il al-Jāḥiẓ*, ed. H. al-Sandūbī (Cairo, 1933), p. 178.

50. Some, however, also took him up on his views, as for instance the two Kūfan Shī'ī brothers, Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad al-Ḥaḍramī and 'Alqama who asked him whether 'Alī was an imam before he resorted to the sword. Zayd is believed to have refused to answer. See

Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 416. Also see Ibn Nashwān al-Ḥimyarī, *Ḥurr al-'ayn*, p. 185 (cited by Rajkowski).

51. Al-Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, pp. 403 ff.

52. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Manāqib*, f. 303 ff.; *Sharḥ*, vol. 3, pp. 274 ff. Also see *Kitāb al-zīna* of Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī who is even earlier than al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān and who is one of the latter's sources.

53. Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab* (Beirut, new edition), vols 3–4, pp. 208 ff., classifies the Zaydiyya into eight groups while al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, speaks of only three – the Jārūdiyya, the Batriyya and the Sulaymāniyya. Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitāb al-milal wa al-niḥal*, part of which Friedlaender has translated in 'The Heterodoxies of the Shiites', considers the Zaydiyya as part of the Shī'a and only talks of the Jārūdiyya. See also al-Nawbakhtī who divides the Zaydiyya into 'weak' and 'strong' and then goes on to sub-divide them (pp. 50 ff.). Al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna*, classifies them into Jārūdiyya (or Sūrḥūbiyya) 'Ijliyya and Batriyya. See pp. 300–2.

54. Al-Shahrastānī speaks of Ṣāliḥiyya, the followers of al-Ḥasan b. Sāliḥ b. Ḥayy and Batriyya as the followers of Kathīr al-Abtār, while al-Baghdādī mentions the two together as Batriyya. He distinguishes the Sulaymāniyya or the Jarīriyya as those who only differed from the Batriyya with regard to 'Uthmān's position.

55. See Wilferd Madelung, 'Imāma', EI2, vol. 3, p. 1166. See also al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 12, 50, who merely says that they repudiate 'Uthmān, Ṭalḥa and Zubayr without specifying the last six years. Al-Baghdādī says that the Batriyya did not commit themselves regarding 'Uthmān, neither attacking his faults nor praising his virtues.

56. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 51. He classifies the 'Ijliyya, followers of Ḥārūn b. Sa'īd al-'Ijlī, with the Batriyya as the 'weak' Zaydiyya.

57. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 12; Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 49.

58. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 50.

59. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 18; al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, ed. H. Ritter (Istanbul, 1929–1930), p. 68. See also Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 50.

60. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 50, maintains this is where the Batriyya differ from the Sunnīs.

61. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 18.

62. Ibid., p. 51. Also refer to Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 50.

63. Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, p. 208; Friedlaender, 'The Heterodoxies of the Shiites', pt. 2, p. 22, gives more sources; al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*,

p. 22.

64. This can be ascertained from al-Murādī's *Amālī Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā*, where Abū al-Jārūd narrates numerous traditions from al-Bāqir. I am grateful to Professor W. Madelung who kindly lent me the microfilm of this manuscript. See also Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 44.

65. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 45–9. See also al-Rāzī's *Kitāb al-zīna*, pp. 300–2. For more details on this name see al-Kashshi, *Rijāl*, p. 150; al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, p. 119, especially see R. Strothmann, *Das Staatsrecht der Zaiditen* (Strasbourg, 1912).

66. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 45; van Arendonk, *Les Débuts*, p. 254, says that al-Hādī considers both patriarchs as apostates who deserved death. According to al-Najrī (d. 877/1172) cited by Madelung, the early authorities held it unlawful to use the formal blessings for the first three caliphs while others had opposite views. However, subsequent authorities, including al-Najrī, maintained firmly that the formal blessing could be used for them.

67. Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 1698 ff., 1700; also al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, pp. 25–6.

68. Al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt*, p. 67.

69. Saʿd b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ashʿarī (al-Qummī), *al-Maqālāt wa al-firaq*, p. 19.

70. Al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, p. 118.

71. Al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt*, p. 67; also refer to Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī's views in al-Hajurī, *Raudah*, fol. 139a cited by Madelung in *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 45. See also al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, pp. 22 for the same views; Ibn Ḥazm omits the question of imamate altogether. Friedlaender, 'The Heterodoxies of the Shiites', p. 22, regards it as strange that he should omit to mention this typical heterodoxy of the Jārūdiyya: the '*Takfīr al-Ṣaḥāba*'.

72. Abū al-Ḥasan Siyāh Sarijān's work, *Kitāb al-muḥīṭ min uṣūl al-imāma ʿalā madhhab al-Zaydiyya*, cited by Madelung in *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 45.

73. *Staatsrecht*, p. 39, cited by Madelung in *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 45.

74. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, pp. 45 ff. More will be said about this in a chapter dealing with *fiqh*.

75. Madelung, 'Imāma', EI2, and Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, pp. 47 ff. For al-Bāqir's school, true knowledge could be found only in the recognised imams.

76. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, pp. 47 ff.

77. Nabia Abbot, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri* (Chicago, 1957–1972), vol. 1, pp. 100, 107 ff.

78. Al-Ṭūsī, *Kitāb al-rijāl* (Najaf, 1381/1961), p. 42.

79. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 49–50.

80. Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Kitāb faḍīlāt al-Muʿtazila*, cited by Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 48. See also D. B. Macdonald 'Ilhām', EI2, vol. 3, pp. 1119–1120.

81. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 48.

82. Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 4, p. 300; Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ*, (Cairo, 1932–1938), vol. 3, p. 185. Some Kūfans maintained that al-Bāqir only concealed his real opinion by using the principle of precautionary dissimulation (*taqiyya*). Traditions referring to the poet Kumayt quote al-Bāqir as very violently disavowing Abū Bakr and ʿUmar (see al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 205 ff.), whereas Kumayt himself never vilified the first two caliphs openly. See al-Kumayt, *Hāshimiyyāt*, p. 155. Dāʿī Idrīs in his *ʿUyūn al-akhbār*, pp. 239 ff., has an interesting account of al-Bāqir's debates with the Harūriyya on the question of ʿAlī's rights and denial of Abū Bakr's. Dāʿī Idrīs does not mention his source but it is certainly other than his usual one, i.e. al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, for the latter does not mention this matter, at least in his *Sharḥ* or his *Manāqib*.

83. Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 5, p. 321.

84. See William F. Tucker, 'Bayān b. Samʿān and the Bayāniyya: Shīʿite Extremists of Umayyad Iraq', *Muslim World*, 65 (1975), pp. 241–53.

85. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, 30,25; al-Baghdadī, *Farq*, pp. 227 ff.; al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, pp. 113 ff. See also M. G. Hodgson, 'Bayān b. Simʿān', EI2., vol. 1, pp. 116–17; Watt, *Formative Period*, p. 51, thinks this might be a later invention to support the Shīʿī claims that al-Bāqir was recognised as imam during his lifetime. See also al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna*, p. 297.

86. Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 1619 ff.

87. His name is variously given as ʿAbd Allāh (b. ʿAmr) b. (al-) Ḥārith al-Kindī al-Kūfī or al-Madāʾinī or al-Shāmī. See Madelung, 'Kaysāniyya', p. 837, where he says this may indicate a fusion of more than one person into a single identity. See also al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt*, vol. 6, p. 22; al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, pp. 233 ff.; 235 ff.; al-Shahrastānī, *al-Milal*, vol. 1, pp. 244 ff. Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitāb al-milal wa al-niḥal*, vol. 4, pp. 187 ff., has ʿAbd Allāh b. al Ḥārith who may be the same person, cf. JAOS, 29, pp. 124 ff.

88. Al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna*, pp. 302 ff., as well as al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 49. See also al-Ash'arī, *Maqâlât*, pp. 6–9, and al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 52–5. Also refer to William F. Tucker, 'Rebels and Gnostics: al-Muġīriyya Ibn Sa'īd and the Muġīriyya', *Arabica*, 22 (1975), pp. 33–47.

89. Al-Ash'arī, *Maqâlât*, pp. 9 ff.; al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, p. 34 and al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, pp. 234 ff. See also William F. Tucker, 'Abū Manṣūr al-'Ijlī and the Manṣūriyya: A Study in Medieval Terrorism', *Der Islam*, 54, (1977), pp. 66–76.

90. See al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna*, p. 306. According to al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, p. 11, he belonged to later times, that is to the period of Imam al-Ṣādiq.

91. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān and al-Kulaynī give it as 114/732 while al-Mas'ūdī puts it as late as 126/743. Al-Nawbakhtī mentions 114/732, adding that others say it is 119 /737. Ibn Sa'd and al-Ya'qūbī place it in 117/735.

92. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. 2, p. 1700; van Arendonk, *Les Débuts*, p. 31, thinks it strange that the Kūfan Shī'a ignored their feelings towards Abū Bakr and 'Umar until the last moment when, as Abū Mikhnaf relates, they cross-examined Zayd and abandoned him. However, if one were to look at the history of the Kūfans in the past, this is not novel; there is nothing unusual about them supporting someone until the last moment and then backing out. The same happened at Ṣiffīn in al-Ḥasan's struggle against Mu'āwiya and at Karbala. In fact even after Karbala, when Sulaymān b. Ṣurad and his group formed the *tawwābūn* wanting to avenge al-Ḥusayn's blood, there too, as is known, only one quarter of those who had initially agreed to wage war actually did so. Thus it is quite likely that the Kūfans did abandon Zayd at the last moment. Moreover, al-Ṭabarī's *Ta'rīkh* uses a report by Abū Mikhnaf who was a contemporary of Zayd b. 'Alī. It is therefore likely that there is very little distortion of facts.

93. See Hodgson's 'How did the Early Shī'a Become Sectarian?' p. 10, n. 60. Hodgson uses this line of argument against Strothmann, *Staatsrecht*, p. 28. Also see his note 61 on the same page where he says 'Soon after his (i.e. al-Bāqir's) death when Zayd's followers abandoned Zayd, they are said to have gone to Ja'far as representing al-Bāqir's claim.'

94. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Manāqib*, f. 303 ff.

95. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 1739–40.

Chapter Four

1. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, vol. 1, pp. 17 ff. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 289; al-Ṭibrisī, al-Shaykh Abū 'Alī al-Faḍl b. al-Ḥasan, *Majmū' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, vol. 3 (Tehran, 1395/1975), pp. 209 ff. Ismaili sources such as Abū al-Fawāris, *al-Risāla fī al-imāma*, ed. and tr. S. N. Makarem (Beirut, 1977), p. 13, and the *al-Maṣābīḥ fī ithbāt al-imāma* of another *dā'ī* of al-Ḥākim's time, Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d.c. 411/1021), ed. Muṣṭafā Ghālib (Beirut, 1969), p. 111, both mention this Qur'ānic verse (without mentioning al-Bāqir's name) as one of the proofs for the validity of 'Alī's divine appointment. This verse is also given in 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, *al-Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 170, and al-Ṭūsī, *Tafsīr al-tibyān* (Najaf, 1957), vol. 3, pp. 549 ff., where the interpretation is on al-Bāqir's authority.

2. 'Abd Allāh Yūsuf 'Alī in his translation of the Qur'ān has adopted this alternative. See Chapter 5, verse 58.

3. See the varying reports given in al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muḥammad al-Zuhrī al-Ghamrāwī (Cairo, 1321/1903), vols 5–6, pp. 285 ff., and in al-Ṭūsī, *Tafsīr al-tibyān*, vol. 3, pp. 549 ff.

4. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 289, says that 'Alī threw a garment (*ḥulla*) rather than a ring to the beggar. This garment had been given to him by the Prophet who had received it as a gift from the King of Abyssinia. Its value, says al-Kulaynī, was 1,000 dinars. Al-Kulaynī appears to be an exception in holding this view for all other scholars, including Twelvers like al-Ṭibrisī, *Majmū' al-bayān*, vol. 3, pp. 209 ff., say it was a ring. See also al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vols 5–6, pp. 285 ff.; al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa asrār al-ta'wīl*, ed. H. O. Fleischer, (Leipzig, 1846–1848), vol. 1, pp. 263.

5. Ḥannād b. al-Sarī reporting from 'Ubāda b. al-Ṣāmit himself and Abū Kurayb reporting again from 'Ubāda himself. See al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vols 5–6, pp. 285 ff.

6. Al-Ṭūsī, *Tafsīr al-tibyān*, p. 549. Note that the word *muwālāt* can have different meanings in different contexts.

7. *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 1, p. 170. Al-Qummī was a younger contemporary of al-Ṭabarī. See also al-Ṭūsī, *Tafsīr al-tibyān*, vol. 3, pp. 549 ff; al-Ṭibrisī, *Majmū' al-bayān*, vol. 3, pp. 209 ff.

8. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vols 5–6, p. 286.

9. The common person in the *isnād* is 'Abd al-Malik. Among al-Bāqir's companions in al-Barqī's *Kitāb al-rijāl* (Tehran, 1342/1923), there are two persons mentioned under this name: 'Abd al-Malik b.

Aṭā' and 'Abd al-Malik b. A'yān, *mawlā* of Banū Shaybān.

10. For more details on this, see Joseph Schacht's *Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 163 ff.

11. 'We have indeed sent down the Message and We shall certainly be its Guardian (Sura 15:9)'. 'If We had willed, We could certainly have brought every soul its true guidance.' (Sūra 12:172)

12. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 17.

13. Other Shī'ī sources on the exegesis of this verse tally with the views expressed by al-Bāqir in al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān's *Kitāb al-walāya*. See *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 1, pp. 171 ff., and al-Ṭūsī's *Tafsīr al-tibyān*, vol. 1, pp. 574 ff. Al-Ṭūsī begins by giving different versions and ends with reports on the authority of al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq that this verse was revealed to the Messenger as an encouragement to deliver what had already been revealed to him before.

14. For more details see L. Veccia Vaglieri 'Ghadīr Khumm', EI2, vol. 2, pp. 993–4.

15. See al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār*, vol. 1, p. 367.

16. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 10, pp. 465 ff.

17. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 17–18; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 289, see also *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 1, p. 162; *Tafsīr al-tibyān* of al-Ṭūsī, vol. 3, pp. 435 ff., and *Majmū' al-bayān* of al-Ṭibrisī, vols 2–3, pp. 159 ff. See also Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna*, in al-Sāmarrā'ī's edition, pp. 256 ff., where this is reported from his son, al-Ṣādiq.

18. See al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār*, vol. 1, p. 247.

19. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 9, pp. 518 and 521.

20. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 31.

21. See Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 5 pp. 146 ff. and al-Ṭūsī, *Tafsīr al-tibyān*, vol. 3, pp. 235 ff. According to Abū al-Fawāris, the author of *al-Risāla fī al-imāma*, the phrase *ūlī al-amr* (those in authority) refers only to 'Alī b. Ṭālib because the Prophet appointed him to be in authority even during his lifetime when he left for his Tabuk expedition. He says that obedience to 'Alī is a requirement because in the Arabic language the letter *alif* and *lām* (*al*) are used for specification.

22. Al-Ṭūsī, *Tafsīr al-tibyān*, vol. 3, pp. 235 ff., al-Ṭibrisī, *Majma'* vols 2–3, p. 64. In *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 1, the tradition is from al-Bāqir's son, al-Ṣādiq.

23. See al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 5, pp. 146 ff.

24. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 31 and al-Ṭūsī, *Tafsīr al-tibyān*, vol. 1, p. 236.

25. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 8, pp. 504–5.

26. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 25–30; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 205–6.

27. See al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 17 ff.; al-Kulaynī *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 205.

28. Al-Bāqir referring to verses 22:77–78 in al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 17 ff. See also al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 205–6.

29. Quoting verse 29:49 'Nay, here are Signs self-evident in the hearts of those endowed with knowledge.'

30. Referring to verse 43:44 in al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 17 ff.; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 210–11.

31. According to his interpretation of verse 13:7, 'You are [only] a warner and for every people there is a guide'. See al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 28; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, 191–2.

32. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 28.

33. Ibid., pp. 29 ff.

34. Ibid., pp. 84 ff., See also his *Kitāb al-himma fī ādāb atbā' al-a'imma* ed. M. Ghālib (Beirut,1979), p. 25 where al-Bāqir adds: 'He who loves us, Allāh will raise him with us on the Day of Resurrection.' He went on to ask: 'Is religion anything but love?' See also al-Ṭibrisī, *Majmū' al-bayān*, vols 9–10, pp. 27–8; al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār*, vol. 2, p. 230, says that this was revealed regarding 'Alī, Fāṭima and their two sons. However, he ends by saying that this verse is also said to have been revealed in reference to Abū Bakr.

35. See Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 84. See also for the same point of view, Muscati and Moulvi, *Life and Lectures of al-Mu'ayyad* (Karachi 1950), pp. 135–6 where some of the *dā'ī*, al-Mu'ayyad al-Shīrāzī's *Majālis* are summarised in English.

36. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 84 ff.

37. See al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 194.

38. See al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 214, and al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 185.

39. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 12, p. 90.

40. See al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 214 and al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 185. It is interesting to note that al-Ṭibrisī, *Majmū' al-bayān*, vol. 3–4, pp. 358–60 does not say that the light was the imam's but gives different traditions to say it was either knowledge and wisdom or the Qur'ān or faith. Another common Qur'ānic verse interpreted to mean that the imams are the light of God is verse 35 of the *Sūra al-Nūr* namely, 'God is the Light of the heavens and the

earth ....' See Ja'far b. Manṣūr al-Yaman, *Kitāb al-kashf*, ed. R. Strothmann (London, 1952), pp. 16–17 and *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 2, pp. 102 ff.

41. See al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 268 for the details of the tradition reported on al-Bāqir's authority.

42. See *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 2, p. 274 where the tradition is narrated on the authority of al-Bāqir's son, al-Ṣādiq who, interpreting this verse, says that it means the imamate.

43. Literally the words *'iṣma* and *ma'ṣum* are derived from the verb *'aṣama* which, according to Lane, means prevented, hindered, protected, defended, preserved, withheld etc. So *'iṣma* is prevention, hindrance, defence, protection; the Shī'a explain it as protection from sin and is a specific quality of the imams. See *Majma' al-baḥrayn*, an Arabic (Shī'ī) lexicon, by Fakhr al-Dīn b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Najafī (Tehran, 1321/1903) under *'aṣama*. Also see EI2 art. '*'Iṣma*'. Dwight M. Donaldson in his *The Shi'ite Religion* (London, 1933), gives a detailed account of *'iṣma*, see pp. 320–38.

44. *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 2, p. 193. The report includes other details such as whether the *ahl al-bayt* included the Prophet's wives or not.

45. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm* (Cairo, 1971). There are, of course, others who, hold that it refers to the wives of the Prophet.

46. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 215.

47. Al-Ghazālī, *al-Iqtiṣād fī al-i'tiqād*, (Ankara, 1962).

48. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 17 ff.; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 288–9.

49. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 294–5; al-Majlisī's *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 37, pp. 108 ff.; al-Kirmānī, *Maṣābīḥ*, pp. 112–13; Abū al-Fawāris, *al-Risāla fī al-imāma*, pp. 28–9.

50. For details and sources see Veccia Vaglieri 'Ghadīr Khumm'.

51. Abū al-Fawāris, *al-Risāla fī al-imāma*, p. 28.

52. Al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*, ed. M. N. al-Albānī (Beirut, 1961), vol. 3, p. 342; al-Dhahabī in fact says that the first part of the *ḥadīth* i.e. 'He whose *mawlā* I am, 'Alī is his *mawlā*' is of the *mutawātir* type (that which has been reported by numerous authorities) while the second part has a strong chain of transmitters. See Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa al-nihāya*, (Cairo, 1347–8/1929–30), vol. 5, p. 24.

53. Ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, ed. A. M. Shākir (Cairo, 1949), vol. 4, pp. 281, 370, 372; vol. 5, pp. 347, 358; al-Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, p.

633; Ibn Māja, *al-Sunan*, ed. M. F. 'Abd al-Bāqī (Cairo, 1952–3) vol. 1, p. 43; Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nasā'ī, *Khaṣā'iṣ Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib* (Cairo, n.d.) p. 26; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, vol. 5, pp. 208–14.

54. Al-Bāqillānī, *Tamhīd*, pp. 169 ff.

55. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, vol. 5, pp. 208–14. See also Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 5, p. 347 as well as al-Juwaynī, *Kitāb al-irshād ila qawāti' al-adilla fī uṣūl al-i'tiqādāt*, ed. M. Y. Mūsā and 'Alī A. 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo, 1950), pp. 421–2, who asserts that the *ḥadīth* '*Man kuntu mawlāhu* ...' is of the *āḥād* type. Refer also al-Bāqillānī, *Tamhīd*, pp. 169 ff.

56. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 17 ff. Al-Bāqir does not give the details of the event but only says that the Prophet endorsed the *walāya* at Ghadīr Khumm. This implies that the event was quite well known by then. The Qāḍī relates the details of the event without mentioning the name of the authority, saying it is well-known and well attested by authorities. The oldest evidence for this event is the poetry of Ḥassān b. Thābit who composed and recited the verses spontaneously when people began congratulating 'Alī. (See al-Amīnī, *al-Ghadīr*, vol. 2, p. 32). However, Horowitz and Goldziher (see 'Kumayt' in EI) think that these verses are spurious; in their view, the earliest evidence of this tradition are Kumayt's verses (d. 126/743).

57. In his *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 21, 25, al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān does not say from whom this tradition is related but only that it is well-known and well-attested (on p. 25 he says it has been related from the Prophet, but again does not say by whom). It is interesting to note that in his version the Prophet said this at Ghadīr Khumm. See also al-Kirmānī, *Maṣābīḥ*, pp. 115–16.

58. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, pp. 24; vol. 6, p. 3; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 7, p. 20. See also Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 3:1, pp. 14–15; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* 1:182; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, vol. 1, p. 43; al-Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, pp. 638–41; al-Nasā'ī, *Khaṣā'iṣ*, p. 4. Also see Ibn Hishām, *Sīrat*, vol. 4, p. 163 and Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *Iqd al-farīd*, vol. 4, p. 311.

59. Al-Bāqillānī, *Tamhīd*, pp. 173–5, 228; al-Juwaynī, *Irshād*, p. 422. See for other arguments given by the Sunnīs, S. N. Makarem's translation of Abū al-Fawāris, *al-Risāla fī al-imāma* (New York, 1977), pp. 73–5.

60. Al-Bāqillānī, *Tamhīd*, pp. 174–5.

61. See Makarem's edition of Abū al-Fawāris, *al-Risāla fī al-imāma*, pp. 28–33.

62. In this case Abū al-Fawāris appears to be ignoring the *Ukhūwwa* between Muḥammad and 'Alī.

63. *Da'ā'im*, vol. 2, p. 343, where a version of it is mentioned by the Qāḍī. Another tradition says: 'He who does not write his testament has a defect in his religion and in his reason.' See *Da'ā'im*, vol. 2, p. 344. Also see Abū al-Fawāris, *al-Risāla* in S. N. Makarem's edition, pp. 32–3.

64. According to some Sunnī commentators these verses are totally abrogated by the so called 'Verses of Inheritance' (Sūra 4:10–14). See Muṣṭafā Zayd, *al-Naskh fī al-Qur'ān al-karīm* (Cairo, 1963), vol. 2, pp. 385–93 (cited by S. N. Makarem), while others believe they are not abrogated. Still others believe that the verses are abrogated only in relation to 'the parents and kinsmen' who are supposed to inherit the property of the deceased. See al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 3, pp. 384 ff. (Cairo edition) for details. There are still others, among them al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, who believe that these verses are not abrogated but are rather elaborated specifically by the 'verses of Inheritance'. Since kinsmen are too remotely connected to be treated as natural heirs, a testament is therefore necessary to allocate each one's share. Each of the natural heirs' share is then specified in the 'Verse of Inheritance.' See Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Bulūgh al-marām min adillāt al-aḥkām*, p. 273.(Cairo, 1933), cited by S. N. Makarem, p. 77 of his translation.

65. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, p. 2; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, p. 70; See also Mālik b. Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭa'*, ed. 'Abd al-Wahhāb 'Abd al-Laṭīf, 2nd ed. (Cairo, 1967), p. 539; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 4, p. 108; Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 2, p. 10; Ibn Māja, *Sunan*, vol. 2, p. 901; al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, vol. 6, p. 239; al-Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, p. 295 and vol. 4, p. 432 and al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī in his *Mishkāt al-maṣābīḥ*, vol. 2, p. 155.

66. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 397.

67. Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 4, p. 96.

68. See al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 2, p. 319.

69. *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 31. See p. 34, 'He who dies without having known the imam of his time (*dahr*) while alive (*ḥayyan*) dies in ignorance.'

70. 'He who dies without knowing the imam of the time dies in ignorance', *al-Risāla fī al-imāma* in S. N. Makarem's edition p. 3 (Arabic text) and p. 22 for translation. Also see note 18 for details.

71. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 183–4.

72. See al-Bāqillānī, *Tamhīd*, pp. 185–6; al-Ghazālī, *Faḍā'iḥ*, pp. 143–4.

73. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 2; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 290, has a tradition from al-Bāqir which says God made five things incumbent upon those who worship Him: they adopted four – *ṣalāt, zakāt, ḥajj* and *ṣawm* – and left aside one, namely the *walāya*.

74. See Abū al-Fawāris, *Risāla*, p. 27 where he refutes the notion that the imam should be chosen and installed by the consensus of the community.

75. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 175.

76. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 18 and al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 289. See for more details the earlier section on the 'Qur'ānic basis of the Imāmate' and al-Mufīd, *Irshād*, tr. Howard, pp. 29 ff.

77. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 306 ff.

78. This gives us another insight to the date of al-Bāqir's death. According to Mufīd's *Irshād*, Nāfi' died in 119/737.

79. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 305 ff.

80. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 238 ff. It is believed that when Zayn al-'Ābidīn died, al-Bāqir's brothers demanded their share of the contents of the casket. But Zayn al-'Ābidīn refused, saying that it was given to him as his exclusive inheritence. The Ḥasanids claimed to have the weapons, but Ja'far al-Ṣādiq emphatically denied that 'Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ and his son Nafs al-Zakiyya had, as they asserted, the famous sword of the Prophet, *Dhū al-Fiqār*. See Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Maqātil*, p. 188; al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 3, p. 247. Other versions in al-Ṭabarī state that they came into the possession of the 'Abbāsids as well.

81. There are conflicting reports from al-Bāqir as to when the *naṣṣ* was bestowed on Imam Zayn al-'Ābidīn, on the battlefield or before setting forth for Karbala. See al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 303.

82. Ibid., pp. 300 ff.

83. Ibid., pp. 298–9. However, later Ismaili sources suggest that after 'Alī, the imam was al-Ḥusayn not al-Ḥasan as the Twelvers and other Shī'īs believe. To the Nizārī Ismailis, al-Ḥasan was a trustee (*mustawda'*) imam. See Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Firās, *al-Shāfiya* (The Healer) ed. and tr. by S. N. Makarem (Beirut, 1966), pp. 146–7. See also 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. al-Walīd, *Risālat al-īḍāḥ wa al-tabyīn fī kayfiyyāt tasalsul wilādatay al-jism wa al-dīn*, ed. with an intro. by R. Strothmann in Gnosis-Texte der Ismailiten. (Göttingen, 1943), p. 139; Ḥātim b.

Imrān Ibn Zahra, *Risālat al-uṣūl wa'l aḥkām*, ed. 'Ārif Tāmir in *Khams rasā'il Ismā'īliyya* (Salamiyya, 1956), p. 120; al-Khaṭṭāb b. Ḥasan, *Ghāyat al-mawālīd.* Excerpts in Wladimir Ivanow, *Ismaili Tradition Concerning the Rise of the Fatimids* (London, 1942), cited by S. N. Makarem's tr. of *ash-Shāfiya.*

84. See al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Ta'wīl al-da'ā'im* ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan al-A'ẓami (Cairo, 1967–72), p. 86. Also see *Kitāb al-kashf* attributed to Ja'far b. Manṣūr al-Yaman ed. Muṣṭafā Ghālib (Beirut, 1984), p. 118.

85. Al-Tirmidhī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 5, p. 301; al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 3, p. 244. Al-Tirmidhī considers this tradition as *gharīb munkar* i.e. resting on only one authority who is unreliable, while al-Bukhārī rejects its authenticity completely. However, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī considers it authentic (see al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt*, vol. 3, p. 315) cited in S. N. Makarem's trans. of *al-Risāla fī al-imāma.* p. 76 note 62.

86. *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 437.

87. Ibid. pp. 192–3, 222, 224, 228–9, 263.

88. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 230. Āṣif (Asaph) said that the earth between him and the throne of Bilqis sank, so that he could reach it with his hand, then the earth returned to its previous state, quicker than an eye could blink. Āṣif was the companion of Solomon.

89. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 257, 176, 270–1; On this see the article of E. Kohlberg, 'The Term 'Muḥaddath' in Twelver Shī'ism', in *Studia Orientalia memoriae D. H. Baneth dedicata*, (Jerusalem, 1979), pp. 39–47. This point is based on the Shī'ī understanding of the Qur'ānic verse 22:52.

90. See al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 194.

91. See Uri Rubin, 'Prophets and Progenitors in Early Shi'a Tradition', JSAI, I, (1979), p. 44.

92. See al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 274, where traditions from al-Bāqir's son, Ja'far al-Ṣādiq reveal that the succeeding imam became aware of the totality of the previous imam's knowledge only at the last moment of the latter's life. See also p. 239, where a tradition relates that before his death, the Prophet called for 'Alī and communicated to him a thousand chapters of knowledge, each one opening into a thousand more.

93. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 442. See also al-Mas'ūdī, *Ithbāt al-waṣiyya* (Najaf, 1945), pp. 90 ff.

94. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 442.

95. Rubin adds, however, that the examination of the exact relationship between the two views is beyond the scope of his paper. For details see Rubin, 'Prophets and Progenitors', pp. 41–65. See also his 'Pre-existence and Light', IOS, 5 (1975), pp. 62 ff.

96. See Rajkowski, 'Early Shīʿism in ʿIraq'.

97. Qurʾān, 7:157; 4:174; 4:45; 57:28; 24:35; 44:89:32; 76:26; and 61:8. See also al-Kumayt, *Hāshimiyyāt* (Leiden, 1904), p. 84, poem 3, verse 39–40.

98. Al-Kirmānī, *Rāḥat al-ʿaql*, ed. M. Ghālib (Beirut, 1967), p. 217, discusses the ʿ*iṣma* of the imam in his analyses of *al-arkān al-arbaʿa* (the four elements) where the soul is the 'learner' and the *bāb, ḥujja* and *dāʿī* are 'teachers'. The imam is above all these, see ibid. pp. 201–18, 250 cited in P. J. Vatikiotis, who has described this in his book, *The Fatimid Theory of State* (Lahore, 1957), pp. 43 ff.

99. P. 110 using Sūra 2: 33, 35–38. Until recently there was a controversy regarding the authorship of this collection of thirty-five discourses in *al-Mustanṣiriyya*, for the book states it is written by 'al-Dāʿī Thiqat al-Imām ʿAlam al-Islām'. This situation appears to have arisen as a result of a continuous change of *dāʿīs* between the years 451/1059–454/1062. Moreover, the position of Imam al-Mustanṣir billāh was becoming precarious as the minister, Badr al-Jamālī, was fast gaining strength. When (in his despair) he assigned the offices of *wazīr, qāḍī al-quḍāt* and *dāʿī al-duʿāt* to one person, the titles of 'Thiqat al-Imām' and 'ʿAlam al-Islām' became common addresses of these officials. Hence the difficulty of knowing which 'Thiqat al-Imām' or 'ʿAlam al-Islām' is which. Ivanow thinks the work belongs to al-Muʾayyad fī al-Dīn, but Vatikiotis is unsure. See for more details, *Fatimid Theory of State*, pp. 201 ff. S. M. Stern, however, has demonstrated that the author is Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd al-Ḥakīm b. Wahb b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Mālījī, chief *qāḍī* from 7 Dhū'l-Qaʿda 450–11 Rajab 452; *Studies in Early Ismāʿīlism*, pp. 239–40.

100. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Walīd, *Tāj al-ʿaqāʾid wa maʿdan al-fawāʾid*, ed. ʿĀrif Tāmir (Beirut, 1967), p. 76.

101. *Ḥujja* in my view is best translated as guarantor. See Madelung, 'Imāma', who has translated it as both 'proof' and 'guarantor' and from whom I have adopted the word. The word 'proof' has been in use for a long time and can still be used but it does not sufficiently indicate or connote the task which the *ḥujja* has to undertake. On the other hand the word 'guarantor' gives the meaning of someone who has undertaken responsibility for others.

102. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 145, 179. See also al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 20–1.

Chapter Five

1. The *fitna* or the dissension in the community resulting from the caliph 'Uthmān's murder.

2. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 26.

3. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 16–17.

4. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, pp. 26–7.

5. Ibid., p. 26.

6. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 15–17, where some of the traditions are from 'Alī. One tradition says *islām* is *iqrār* (confession) and *īmān* is *iqrār* and *ma'rifa* (knowledge consisting of acknowledgement of God, the Prophet and the imams).

7. See al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 26 where the word *fi'l* is used instead of *'amal*.

8. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 1. His tradition in *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 70 says that 'Alī reported from the Prophet, saying that there can be no 'words' except by 'works' and no 'words or works' except by 'intention' and no 'intention' except by adhering to the *sunna* correctly (*iṣāba al-sunna*).

9. Here it is not possible to go into the details of what status the Khārijiyya and Mu'tazila accord to the 'grave sinner', see the article on 'Īmān', by L. Gardet, EI2, vol. 3, pp. 1170–4.

10. A. J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed* (Cambridge, 1932), pp. 38, 45. See also al-Ṣādiq's views on the Murji'a in the *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 1.

11. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Kitāb al-zīna* in al-Sāmarrā'ī, p. 262.

12. W. Madelung, 'The Early Murji'a in Khurasan and Transoxania and the Spread of Ḥanifism', *Der Islam*, 59, 1982, pp. 32–9.

13. Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, p. 202.

14. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, pp. 45, 47.

15. Ibid., p. 53.

16. Ibid., p. 99.

17. Ibid., pp. 87, 93.

18. Ibid., p. 35, 41.

19. The word *taqiyya* is derived from the verb *waqā* which means to keep from, or guard, someone or something against someone or something else. See R. Strothmann, 'Takiya', EI, vol. 4, pp. 628–9 for

a general account and E. Kohlberg's article 'Some Imāmi-Shīʿī Views on Taqiyya', JAOS, 95 (1975), pp. 395–402.

20. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 51. Cf. a tradition from al-Bāqir in the *Daʿāʾim*, vol. 1, p. 17, where al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī deliberately concealed the 'message' (of *walāya*) revealed to the Prophet from a certain questioner, thus contradicting his own views about not concealing knowledge.

21. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 65.

22. Al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, *Daʿāʾim*, vol. 1, p. 75. See also Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr al-Yaman's *Asrār al-nuṭaqāʾ* in Ivanow's *Ismaili Tradition Concerning the Rise of the Fatimids* (excerpts), p. 92.

23. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 65.

24. Al-Barqī, *Kitāb al-maḥāsin*, vol. 2, p. 300.

25. Al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, *Sharḥ*, p. 266 ff; *Manāqib* f. 303 ff. 'Anyone from among the Prophet's family who undertakes the sword before our *mahdi's* time is like the young bird who tries to fly before its wings are strong enough; as a result it would only jump once or twice before being caught by the children who would then toy with it.'

26. Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabāqāt*, vol. 5, p. 231.

27. Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, p. 2778.

28. See Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 205 ff. where traditions referring to the poet al-Kumayt quote al-Bāqir as violently disavowing Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. But al-Kumayt himself never vilified the first two caliphs openly according to his *Hāshimiyyât* (p. 155) at least. Perhaps al-Kumayt was using *taqiyya* as the *Hāshimiyyāt* was a poem for the public.

29. It is important here to stress that the concealing of one's true opinion, in all its aspects, is not the same as hypocrisy. The case in question, namely the status of the first two caliphs, reveals the principle at work here: the caliphs can be regarded, in one respect, as 'leaders of right guidance' insofar as the explicit, formal principles by which they ruled were correct; while, in another respect, they were regarded as falling short of absolute legitimacy, insofar as their caliphate contravened the designation of ʿAli as the true successor of the Prophet. There are degrees of validity, just as there are aspects and points of view bearing on this question; such subtleties and complexities must not be lost sight of if the principle of *taqiyya* is to be understood correctly.

30. Qurʾān 16:106. Another such verse is 3:28.

31. Al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār*, vol. 1:528; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-*

'aẓīm, vol. 2:586. Although the Sunnīs allowed such *taqiyya*, they preferred that the believer abide by the declaration of his faith.

32. W. M. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburgh, 1979), p. 31.

33. 'The earth is God's; He has entrusted it to His *khalīfa*; he who is chief therein will not be overcome.' Al-Farazdaq, *Dīwān*, vol. 1, ed. (Beirut, 1960), p. 24. 'God has garlanded you with the *khilāfa* and guidance, for what God decrees (*qaḍā'*) there is no change'. Jarīr, *Dīwān* (Beirut, 1960), p. 380.

34. The name would have been more appropriate for those who maintained God's omnipotence and His *qadar*, but it came to be applied to those who believed in human responsibility and free will. See D. B. MacDonald, 'Qadariyya', EI, vol. 4, pp. 605–6, 'Qaḍā' EI, vol. 4, pp 603–4; 'Qadar', EI, vol. 4, p. 605. See also W. M. Watt, *Free Will and Predestination* (London, 1948), pp. 48 ff. It is to be noted, however, that at the time men who agreed on certain doctrines did not necessarily associate them with certain principles. This varied from time to time as well as from person to person.

35. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 107, 154.

36. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 159.

37. See for details regarding al-Ṣādiq's views Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 58 n. 94. See also al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, pp. 159–60.

38. For details see Watt, *Formative Period*, p. 179 and for an even fuller discussion see his 'Early Discussions about the Qur'ān', *Muslim World*, 11 (1950), pp. 27–40, 96–105. Perhaps there was also a connection between the problem of an uncreated Qur'ān and that of the 2nd person of the trinity in Christian theology.

39. It must be pointed out, however, that those who believed in human free will did not generally deny the eternal foreknowledge of God.

40. Watt, *Formative Period*, p. 179.

41. It must be remembered that there were many predestinarians also who held that the Qur'ān was created.

42. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 82.

43. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 305.

44. Abū Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat*, vol. 3, p. 188.

45. W. M. Patton, *Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and the Miḥna* (Leiden, 1897), p. 139 where Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal quotes this statement: *al-Qur'ān kalām Allāh, la khāliq wa lā makhlūq* in defence of his own position. See also W. Madelung, 'Imāmism and Mu'tazilite Theology' in *Le Shī'isme*

Imāmite (Paris, 1970), p. 18.

46. Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, p. 164.

47. Al-Kulayni, *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, pp. 86–7.

48. Ibid., p. 82.

49. This answer, in response to a theological question, seems to have mystical connotations and is used by later Ṣūfis.

50. Al-Kulayni, *al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 97. The *Khāriji* went away saying: 'God knows where to place His message.'

51. Ibid., p. 99.

52. Ibid., p. 92.

53. This relates well to the concept of *tawḥid* as defined by al-Sijistānī, an Ismaili intellectual writing nearly a century and a half after al-Bāqir. See Paul Walker, *Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistānī* (London, 1996), pp. 84–8.

Chapter Six

1. Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, vols 9–10 (Hyderabad, India, 1326/1908), pp. 350 ff.; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā* (Beirut n.d.), vol. 5, p. 324 (Leiden, 1965), pp. 235 ff.; Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl b. Aybak al-Safadi, *al-Wafi bi al-wafayāt*, vol. 4, (Cairo, n.d.), pp. 102–3. Abū Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat*, vol. 3, pp. 180 ff.

2. Mālik b. Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭa'*, vols 1–2, edited with a commentary by Muḥammad Fu'ād 'Abd al-Bāqi (Algeria, 1951). See traditions 40, 44, 107, 126, 127, 131 and 158 in vol. 1 and tradition 17 in vol. 2.

3. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 410, 446 and 485; vol. 3, pp. 73 and 212. vol. 5, pp. 153, 347, 349, 351, 389, and 448; vol. 6, p. 61; vol. 7, pp. 181, 208 and 569.

4. Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 1, tradition 576; vol. 2, traditions 597, 601, 605 and 688; vol. 3, traditions 1833 and 2081; vol. 4, traditions 2153 and 2284.

5. Al-Shāfi'ī, *al-Risāla fī uṣūl al-fiqh*, 2nd edition by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir (Cairo, 1979), traditions 1245 and 1182.

6. Abū Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat*, vol. 3, p. 186.

7. Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, vol. 10, pp. 350 ff.

8. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Sharḥ*, vol. 3. pp. 282–3 and *Manāqib*, ff. 301–2.

9. See Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, vols 9–10, pp. 350 ff. which gives a list

of those people who said that he was called 'Bāqir al-'Ilm'. This includes the name of Zubayr b. Bakkār (d. 256/869), a scholar of historical traditions at Medina who later became a *qāḍī* at Mecca.

10. See 'Abd al-Rahman al-Hafiz, 'The Life of al-Zuhrī and his Scholarship in Ḥadīth and Sunna', (PhD thesis, Edinburgh 1977), pp. 268–70. Al-Zuhri has in fact reported that he had most of his sittings in the company of Zayn al-'Ābidīn, Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Mizzī (d. 743 ah) *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, vol. 7, under the heading 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn' quoted in al-Hafiz, 'The Life of al-Zuhrī'. See also Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 5, p. 158, who mentions that it was only Zayn al-'Ābidīn who could free Zuhrī from a sadness that had once struck him. Refer to Ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad*, vol. 3, traditions no. 1882 and 1889.

11. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, p. 112; al-Zuhrī has definitely stated that these princes forced them to write *ḥadīth*.

12. Mālik b. Anas had given his oath of allegiance along with others to the 'Abbāsid al-Manṣūr under compulsion. He was publicly flogged for venturing to make the decision that an oath given under compulsion was not binding. His interest in collecting traditions was for the sake of their bearing on jurisprudence and his *Muwaṭṭa'* is not one of the six canonical collections.

13. See Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, vols 11–12, p. 369, where it is stated that he died during 'Umar II's reign.

14. See Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 4, tradition 2153.

15. See Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Iḥkām fī uṣūl al-aḥkām*, vol. 5, p. 96. Al-Shāfi'ī, *al-Risāla* (Cairo, 1938) tradition no. 1245, Mālik, *Muwaṭṭa'*, vol. 1, traditions 107, 126, 127 and 131.

16. Mālik, *Muwaṭṭa'*, vol. 1, traditions 40 and 44.

17. Ibid., traditions 107, 126, 127 and 131.

18. Ibid., traditions 158 and vol. 2, tradition 17.

19. Al-Shāfi'ī, *al-Risāla*, traditions 1245 and 1182.

20. Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, vol. 3, tradition 2081; also vol. 1, tradition 576.

21. Ibid., vol. 2, traditions 601 and 688.

22. See M. J. Kister, 'Djābir b. 'Abd Allāh', in Supplement to EI2, p. 231.

23. E. Kohlberg, 'An Unusual Shi'i' *isnād*' in *Israel Oriental Studies*, 5 (1975), 142–9. See also Kister's 'Djābir b. 'Abd Allāh'.

24. Ibid.

25. Al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rīkh al-Islām*, vol. 4, p. 299.

26. Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat*, vol. 3, p. 188.

27. Mālik, *Muwaṭṭa'* (recension of Zurqānī) vol. 1, p. 10; Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat*, vol. 3, p. 363. For more details, see Hafiz, 'The Life of al-Zuhrī', p. 238.

28. For more details see ibid., pp. 162 ff.

29. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 227; al-Zirkilī, *A'lām*, vol. 8, p. 212.

30. Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, p. 172; Samʿānī, *Ansāb*, p. 173.

31. Al-Dhahabī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 6, p. 559; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, 403–4.

32. Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 7, 185; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, vol. 6, pp. 238–42; Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat*, vol. 6, 135–49.

33. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 227.

34. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 2, pp. 410, 485; vol. 5, pp. 153 ff.

35. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 446; vol. 3, p. 73.

36. Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 347 ff. and 389 reporting the murder of al-Ḥusayn at Karbala.

37. Ibid., vol. 5, p. 448.

38. Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-rijāl* (Tehran, 1342/1923), p. 79.

39. Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabāqāt*, vol. 5, pp. 344–5; Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat*, vol. 3, p. 311.

40. See al-Ṣaffār, *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt*, vol. 2, p. 299; vols 4 and 6, p. 300, cited in al-Sayyid Murtaḍā al-ʿAskarī, *Muqaddimāt mirāt al-ʿuqūl*, vol. 2 (Tehran, 1398/1977), pp. 54–7. However, it is quite likely that al-Bāqir spoke most often on his own authority as an imam and it was only assumed that what he said was traceable to the Prophet.

41. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq*, pp. 49–50.

42. Al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, *Manāqib li ahl al-bayt*, f. 299b.

43. Al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, *Sharḥ*, vol. 3, p. 277.

44. Al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, *Manāqib*, f. 299b.

45. It is to be noted, however, that the Sunnī *ḥadīth* authorities do not say that the *maqṭūʿ* ('interrupted' or 'broken') traditions from al-Bāqir are regarded as *mawṣūl* or traceable to the Prophet, although a few traditions are found in their works where the *isnāds* end with al-Bāqir's reiterations. This does in a way imply what al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān says about al-Bāqir. On the other hand, the fact that al-Bāqir is so rarely quoted in Sunnī *ḥadīth* collections may well be because, in the Sunnī view, his *isnāds* were formally defective although this does not contradict the fact that he was considered *thiqa* (trustworthy) as a transmitter.

46. Al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān in his *Sharḥ*, vol. 3, pp. 277–9 has an

interesting account of what al-Bāqir said regarding the beginnings of the House of Ka'ba and the creation of mankind as well as the covenant between man and God.

47. Ibid. This view tallies with that of al-Mufīd.

48. Al-Mufīd, *al-Irshād*, tr. Howard, p. 396. See also Ibn Shahrāshub, *Manāqib*, cited in 'Āmilī, '*A'yān al-Shī'a* 4, pp. 3 ff. mentions 'No one from among the sons of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn will be as learned as al-Bāqir in the sciences such *as tafsīr, kalām, futyā, aḥkām, ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*.'

49. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Sharḥ*, vol. 3, p. 282; *Manāqib*, f. 300.

50. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Manāqib*, f. 300.

51. Al-Murādī, *Amālī Aḥmad b. 'Īsā*, passim (Zaydī); al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vols 1 and 2 passim (Ithnā'asharī); al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im al-Islām* and *Mā wujida min Kitāb al-īḍāḥ*, passim (Ismaili).

52. Al-Barqī, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, pp. 9–16; Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, passim; al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, passim; al-Ṭūsī, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, passim.

53. Al-Sam'ānī, 'Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad, *Kitāb al-ansāb* (Leiden,1912), p. 113; al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 191 ff; al-Najāshī, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, (Tehran, n.d.), pp. 93–4.

54. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 129; al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-i'tidāl*; al-Sam'ānī calls him a liar while al-Najāshī thinks he was weak.

55. Al-Ḥā'irī, Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl, *Muntahā al-maqāl* (Tehran, 1302/1884), p. 230; al-Tafrishī, *Naqd al-rijāl*, fol. 147 b., cited in Rajkowski 'Early Shi'ism in 'Irāq'. For more details see Madelung, 'Djābir al-Dju'fī' in EI2, Supplement, pp. 232–3. See also Heinz Halm, 'Das "Buch der Schatten." Die Mufaddal-Tradition der Gulat und die Ursprunge des Nusairiertum', *Der Islam*, 58 (1981), pp. 29 ff.

56. Al-Ḥā'irī, *Muntahā*, 307–8.

57. He was accused of extremism and regarded as a 'weak' traditionist, see al-Ḥā'irī, *Muntahā*, p. 311; al-Najāshī, *Rijāl*, p. 298.

58. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 126–7.

59. Ibid., pp. 129–30; al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 11, p. 98.

60. Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, vol. 11, p. 98. Another tradition maintains that he claimed to have known 50,000 or even 70,000 traditions which he would not relate to anyone. See al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 128; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, vol. 2, p. 49; al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān*, vol. 1, p. 155.

61. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 128.

62. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 251; al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 128.

63. Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, p. 267 calls him a *ghālī* and Ibn Ḥajar

calls him a Saba'ite. See *Tahdhib*, vol. 2, p. 50.

64. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 126–7; al-Ḥā'irī, *Muntahā*, p. 73 See Madelung's article 'Djābir al-Dju'fī' where it is argued that there may have been some relationship between him and al-Mughīra since, according to the Sunnī heresiographers, Jābir became the leader of Mughīra's extremist Shī'ī followers after the latter was killed in 119/737 by Khālid al-Qasrī, governor of Kūfa.

65. W. Ivanow, 'Notes sur l'*Ummu'l-kitāb* des Ismaëliens de l'Asie Centrale', REI, 6 (1932), pp. 419–82. Also see *Der Islam* 23 (1936) where Ivanow has edited the *Ummu'l kitāb*. Pio Filippani-Ronconi uses the above edition in his article 'The Soteriological Cosmology of Central-Asiatic Ismailism', in *Ismaili Contributions to Islamic Culture*, ed. S. H. Nasr (Tehran, 1977), pp. 101–20.

66. Edward E. Salisbury, 'Translation of an Unpublished Arabic Risāla', JAOS 3 (1853), pp. 107–93.

67. Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, pp. 9–2; al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 419 ff.

68. Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, p. 10. Al-Kashshī relates that it was al-Ṣādiq who said this to Abān.

69. Al-Ḥā'irī, *Muntahā*, p. 120.

70. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 161, 167 ff.

71. Ibid. pp. 276, 347 ff. See Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, p. 135 who says that Shaykh Ṭūsī in his *Kitāb al-rijāl* has mistaken Ḥamza's title, al-Ṭayyār, as his father's, for he writes Ḥamza b. al-Ṭayyār. This must be because in the *Kitāb al-rijāl* his name is given as Ḥamza b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ṭayyār.

72. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 133–61, gives a detailed account of Zurāra and his circle.

73. See al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vols 1 and 2 passim as well as other books of tradition.

74. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 169, 238.

75. Massignon, *Lexique*, p. 147, cited in Rajkowski, 'Early Shi'ism in 'Irāq.'

76. Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, p. 65; al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 155.

77. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 113 and al-Ḥā'irī's *Muntahā*, pp. 249–50.

78. Al-Barqī, *Rijāl*, p. 9 (he later joined the Zaydiyya).

79. Ibid. See also Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, p. 77 and al-Kashshī's *Rijāl*, pp. 201 ff. Al-Thumālī's actual name was Thābit b. Dīnār.

80. Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-rijāl*, p. 77 quoting *Fihrist*, p. 127.

81. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, pp. 201 ff.

82. Ibid., pp. 213 ff. He was an Arab from Baṣra. Al-Barqī, *Rijāl*,

p. 11.

83. Al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī,* vol. 16, pp. 330 ff; al-Jāḥiẓ, *Bayān,* vol. 1, p. 46.

84. Al-Kumayt does not go beyond the limits of '*tashhayyu' ḥasan*' unlike al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī who offended many people by vilifying the person of the first two caliphs. See al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī,* vol. 7, p. 41, lines 15–17 (reference quoted from Arendonk's *Les Débuts,* p. 15, n. 2).

85. Al-Iṣfahānī, *al-Aghānī,* vol. 16, p. 333.

86. Al-Kumayt, *Hāshimiyyāt,* 2nd poem verses 28, 31 and 37 ff.

87. Ibid., verses 38 ff.

88. Ibid., verse 29 quoting Qur'ānic verses 40–46 of *Sūra Ḥā Mīm.* He also quotes verses 22:42; 33:33; 17:28 and 8:42.

89. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl,* pp. 185 ff.; Najāshī, *Rijāl,* p. 228; Ibn Nadīm, *Fihrist,* p. 176.

90. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl,* p. 214; al-Ḥā'irī, *Muntahā,* p. 239.

91. Ibn Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-rijāl,* p. 58; al-Kashshī, *Rijāl,* p. 143.

92. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl,* p. 214; al-Ḥā'irī, *Muntahā,* p. 293.

93. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl,* pp. 211, 238; al-Ḥā'irī, *Muntahā,* pp. 304–5.

94. Al-Barqī, *Rijāl,* p. 15.

95. W. Ivanow, *The Alleged Founder of Ismailism* (Bombay, 1946). See also his *Rise of the Fatimids* (London, 1942), pp. 127–56.

96. Al-Najāshī, *Rijāl,* p. 233; al-Ḥā'irī, *Muntahā,* p. 263.

97. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl,* pp. 144–5; al-Ḥā'irī, *Muntahā,* p. 353; al-Barqī, *Kitāb al-rijāl,* p. 14.

98. Ibn Dāwūd, *Rijāl,* p. 13.

99. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim,* pp. 44 ff.

100. Al-Nawbakhtī, *Firaq,* pp. 52–5.

Chapter Seven

1. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim,* p. 44.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* vol. 7, p. 496. See also Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt,* vol. 5, pp. 156–64; Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj in his *Rijāl 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr* mentions 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn's name as being one of those who taught privately at home. Among scholars who attended his classes were Zuhrī see ff. 3–5a in the above work cited in Hafiz, 'The Life of al-Zuhrī', p. 26. The manuscript is in the Zāhiriyya Library, Damascus, no. 55 (ff. 139–46).

3. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 2, p. 20. This tradition is also reported in a slightly abbreviated form by al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 425.

4. Al-Ṣaffār, *Baṣā'ir al-darajāt*, vol. 2, p. 299. See also vol. 1, p. 299, vols 4 and 6, p. 300. Al-'Askarī, *Muqaddimāt mirāt al-'uqūl* (Tehran, 1938), vol. 2, pp. 54–7. Also see al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 58.

5. J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford, 1979), p. 34.

6. M. A. Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shī'ism*, tr. David Streight (Albany, N.Y., 1994), pp. 5–16.

7. Douglas S. Crow, 'The Role of *al-'aql* in Early Islamic Wisdom With Reference to Imam Ja'far al-Ṣādiq', (PhD thesis, McGill University, 1996).

8. Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 262 ff.

9. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, pp. 46–7.

10. Schacht, *Origins*, p. 267.

11. See the tradition of Ibn Dā'i that Fuḍayl b. Rassān and Abū Khālid al-Wāsiṭī claimed that every descendant of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn resembled the prophet in their knowledge, before they learnt anything and while they were still in their nappies. See *Tabṣirāt al-'awwām*, p. 186, cited in Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 48.

12. E. Griffini has published a compendium of *fiqh* attributed to the founder of Zaydiyya entitled *Majmū' al-fiqh of Zayd. b. 'Alī* (d 122/740) under the title *Corpus Juris di Zayd ibn 'Alī*, (Milan, 1919).

13. Article on *'Fiqh'* in SEI, p. 104.

14. Strothmann, *Islam* 13 no. 8 cited by Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 53.

15. MS. British Museum, Or. 3877, f. 72a cited by Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 54. In his view the inclusion of the tradition attributed to Zayd implying that God's commands were just as valid for the Prophet's family is clearly directed against the Imāmites who raise the imam above the law.

16. Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 54. See Howard, 'Imāmī Shī'ī Ritual', p. 324 for a different view.

17. Griffini, *Corpus*, Introduction, p. 173. Cited in Madelung, *Der Imām al-Qāsim*, p. 54. Madelung has a detailed discussion about the corpus.

18. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, and especially his *Kitāb al-īḍāḥ* contain numerous traditions of al-Bāqir.

19. The bulk of traditions in Kulaynī's *al-Kāfī* are from al-Bāqir and his son al-Ṣādiq.

20. The possibility of resorting to the imam directly over such problems and questions ended for the Ithnā'ashariyya with the occultation of their Twelfth Imam; they rely on the system of *uṣūl* and *furū'* developed on the basis of the imams' teaching. The Ismailis, on the other hand, have direct recourse to a living imam. (See Coulson, *History of Islamic Law*, p. 313). Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'man in his *Ikhtilāf uṣūl al-madhāhib* ed. M. Ghālib (Beirut, 1973), p. 51 gives *madhāhib al-a'imma* as a third source besides the Qur'ān and *sunna* of the Prophet.

21. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Sharḥ*, p. 281; *Da'ā'im*, p. 133; al-Murādī, *Amālī Aḥmad b. 'Īsā*, f. 234a; al-Mufīd, *Irshād*, tr. Howard, p. 396; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 30.

22. Schacht, *Origins*, p. 263.

23. Qur'ān 5:6. There are many points (e.g. elbows – to or from – extent of the face, wetting the beard, etc.) in this verse that became a subject of dispute but we shall be dealing only with the *masḥ* since it happened to be the area where the greatest dispute occurred.

24. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 10, p. 58 ff.

25. Abū Ḥanīfa does not mention it in his *Fiqh akbar* while mentioning other points of difference from the Shī'a.

26. Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 263–4.

27. Al-Murādī, *Amālī Aḥmad b. 'Īsā*, f. 234.

28. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Sharḥ*, p. 281; *Da'ā'im*, vol. 2, p. 133.

29. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 32.

30. A. J. Wensinck, 'Nabīdh', SEI, p. 428 where references are given for these different varieties.

31. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 2, p. 130.

32. Al-Murādī, *Amālī Aḥmad b. 'Īsā*, f. 224b; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 32. The tradition in the *Amālī* is from al-Bāqir's son al-Ṣādiq.

33. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 2, p. 126.

34. Al-Kashshī, *Rijāl*, p. 232. This, however, seems to be the usual smear between religious rivals.

35. Al-Murādī, *Amālī Aḥmad b. 'Īsā*, f. 224 b.

36. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Kitāb al-īḍāḥ*, f. 117 a and b., 118 b. See also *Da'ā'im* p. 193 where the tradition is from al-Ṣādiq.

37. Mālik, *Muwaṭṭa'*, vol. 1, p. 8, forbids it to be said loudly.

38. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 32.

39. Ibid., p. 313.

40. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, pp. 133, 193. On p. 193, he mentions a tradition which has been reported on the authority of the Messenger, 'Alī, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, 'Alī Zayn al-'Ābidīn,

Muḥammad al-Bāqir and Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, saying that they all pronounced the *bismillāh* loudly in *Sūra al-Fātiḥa* and at the beginning of the *sūra* in each *rukū'*. 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn asserts that all the children of Fāṭima are agreed on this question.

41. See W. Heffening *'Mut'a'*, in SEI, pp. 418–20 where further references are given to this. See also I. K. A. Howard, '*Mut'a* Marriage', pp. 82–92. Howard feels that because the Jarūdiyya were formerly supporters of al-Baqir, this could mean that he did hold the doctrine.

42. A problem arose in this context because the *tamattu'* form of pilgrimage could involve the other *mut'a, mut'at al-nisā'*, for the pilgrim who performed the *'umra* as early as the month of Shawwāl or Dhu'l Qa'da would resume normal life until the time of *ḥajj*. During this time, if he happened to be away from his family, he would perhaps contract a temporary marriage, concluded for a fixed term, at the end of which it is dissolved automatically. This kind of marriage is of special interest as it is one of the main areas of discussion between the Sunnīs and certain Shī'ī communities, especially the Ithnā'asharīs. For more details see Howard, 'Imāmī Shī'ī Ritual', pp. 79–91.

43. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Kitāb al-īḍāḥ*, f. 41b; *Da'ā'im*, p. 182, al-Murādī, *Amālī*, f. 24b; al-Faḍl b. Shādhān, *al-Īḍāḥ*, pp. 201–2.

44. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Kitāb al-īḍāḥ*, f. 44 b; *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 172; al-Murādī, *Amālī*, al-Faḍl b. Shādhān, *al-Īḍāḥ*, pp. 201–2. The full formula for the Shī'ī *adhān* would thus run as follows: (1) *Allāhu Akbar* (2) *Ashhadu an lā ilāha illā Allāh* (3) *Ashhadu anna Muḥammadan Rasūl Allāh* (4) *Ḥayya 'alā al-ṣalāt* (5) *Ḥayya 'alā al-falāḥ* (6) *Ḥayya 'alā khayr al-'amal* (7) *Allāhu akbar* (8) *Lā ilāha illā Allāh*. The Sunnī *adhān* does not have number (6). See Th. W. Juynboll, 'Adhān', EI2, vol. 1, pp. 187–8.

45. *Al-Muwaṭṭa'* – recension of al-Shaybānī (Cairo, 1976), p. 55.

46. I. K. A. Howard, 'The Development of the *adhān* and *iqāma* of the *ṣalāt* in Early Islam', *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 26 (1981). See also his thesis, 'Imāmī Shī'ī Ritual', p. 266.

47. Mālik b. Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭa'* (recension of Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Layth) (Beirut, 1955).

48. Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitāb al-muḥallā* (Cairo, 1351/1932), vol. 3, 161.

49. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Kitāb al-īḍāḥ*, f. 41b, 44b; *Da'a'im* p. 182; al-Murādī, *Amālī Aḥmad b. 'Īsā*, f. 24–25; al-Faḍl b. Shadhan, *al-Īḍāḥ*, pp. 201–2.

50. Howard, 'Imāmī Shī'ī Ritual', pp. 266–77.

51. Supplication may include cursing although not necessarily. See for more details, A. J. Wensinck, 'Kunūt', SEI, p. 271, which says there is no unanimity among lexicographers about its meaning.

52. Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, vol. 5, pp. 228–37 (new edition).

53. Muslim, *Kitāb al-īmān*, trad 100; al-Tirmidhī, *Ṣalāt*, bāb 168. See for more details Wensinck, 'Kunūt'.

54. Al-Shāfi'ī, *Kitāb al-umm*, vol. 7, pp. 285–7.

55. See Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 267–8 for more references.

56. Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-āthār*, p. 69 dislikes *qunūt* in general but allows it in *witr*. He includes a tradition from 'Alī saying 'Praise Allāh, bless the Messenger and ask (help) for yourself.' This does not specifically imply cursing.

57. Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 267–8.

58. This tallies with the views of the Murji'a who endeavoured not to get involved in disputes over the merits of the companions. See A. J. Wensinck, 'Murji'a', EI, vol. 6, pp. 734–5.

59. Mālik, *Muwaṭṭa'*, vol. 1, pp. 159, 139.

60. See Howard, 'Imāmī Shī'ī Ritual', p. 284 n. 20.

61. The traditions report only that he heard Abū Ja'far (al-Bāqir) saying that the Prophet and 'Alī would curse men in *qunūt*, naming them specifically. See f. 37b in *Amālī Aḥmad b. 'Īsā*.

62. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 246.

63. Al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, pp. 339–40; and al-Barqī, *Kitāb al-maḥāsin*, vol. 2, p. 324.

64. Al-Shāfi'ī, *Kitāb al-umm*, vol. 7, pp. 285–7 has traditions from al-Bāqir and al-Ṣādiq supporting *qunūt* in all prayers.

65. Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. 1, p. 282; Zayd b. 'Alī, *Musnad*, p. 167; al-Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. 3, p. 171.

66. Abū Yūsuf in his *Kitāb al-āthār* reports a tradition from Ibrāhīm al-Nakhā'ī. Also see Howard, 'Imāmī Shī'ī Ritual', p. 172 for more details.

67. Ibid. The Zaydīs preserve a similar account without 'Umar's search for the last funeral service performed by the Prophet or his conclusion from it.

68. Zaydī tradition from Zayd b. 'Alī who reports that 'Alī used to say four, five, six or seven *takbīrs*; but he himself states that there are five *takbīrs*. Ibid.

69. Mālik, *Muwaṭṭa'*, vol. 1, pp. 226–7, See Howard, 'Imāmī Shī'ī Ritual' for details on the weakness in Mālik's traditions.

70. Al-Shāfi'ī, *Kitāb al-umm,* vol. 1, p. 239.

71. Ibid., p. 251 and vol. 7, p. 156.

72. Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitāb al-muḥallā,* vol. 5, p. 124. Among them were Zayd b. al-Arqam, Ibn Mas'ūd and 'Alī.

73. I. K. Poonawala, 'Al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān and Isma'ili Jurisprudence' in *Mediaeval Isma'ili History and Thought,* ed. Farhad Daftary (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 117–43.

Epilogue

1. Idrīs 'Imād al-Dīn. *Zahr al-ma'ānī,* ed. M. Ghālib (Beirut, 1991), pp. 215–16.

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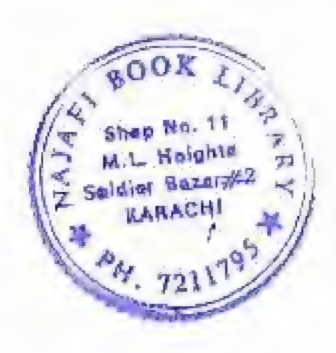
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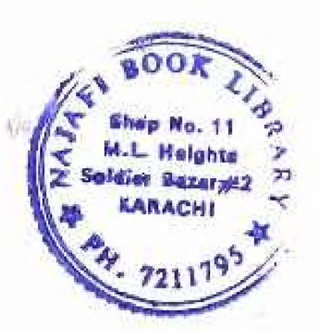
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